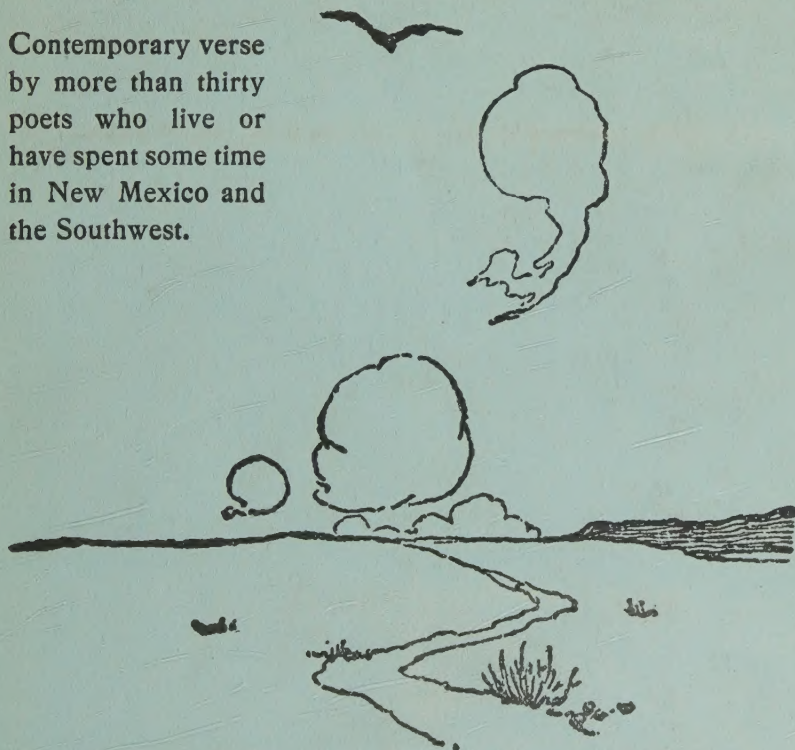

The TURQUOISE TRAIL

Contemporary verse
by more than thirty
poets who live or
have spent some time
in New Mexico and
the Southwest.



Alice Corbin Henderson

THE TURQUOISE TRAIL

By Alice Corbin Henderson

'ALICE CORBIN HENDERSON has done a praiseworthy thing indeed. She has selected for the busy reader who loves poetry all the best of the contemporary verse that has been written about the Southwest. There is poetry for every taste in this brief anthology. Thirty-seven poets are represented by from one to seven of their poems, and there is not a thing in the book that this reviewer and lover of poetry would have had omitted.' — *Boston Transcript*.

'One of the most interesting anthologies published for years.' — *Chicago Tribune*.

'A splendid attempt to capture the desert atmosphere and create poetry out of it. This book should interest any one at all concerned about our native literature.' — *Contemporary Verse*.

B
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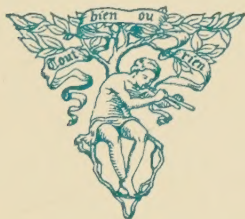
THE TURQUOISE TRAIL
An Anthology of New Mexico Poetry

The Turquoise Trail

An Anthology of New Mexico Poetry

Compiled by

ALICE CORBIN HENDERSON



Boston and New York
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The Riverside Press Cambridge

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This book is dedicated to the poets included in the collection, and offered to them as a record of companionships — the covers of the book now taking the place of the low-roofed adobe houses within whose walls most of the poems have, at one time or another, been shared in manuscript form.



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PREFACE

ORDINARILY, State boundaries are not demarcations of separate and distinct poetic atmospheres; but the life in New Mexico represents an atmosphere and a world entirely different from that of any other part of the country. In other words, New Mexico has a separate and distinct regional personality; and the reflection of this personality in the work of contemporary poets furnishes both the text and the inevitable justification for this anthology.

As used here, also, the word New Mexico has a wider significance than just the name of the State. It means still — in the sense of a retained atmospheric flavor — the old Spanish province of *Nuevo México*, the northernmost fringe of Spanish empire in the New World; a province that included originally not only New Mexico, but Arizona, California, and Texas, as well as the shadowy borderlands of other Western and Northwestern States. It is now, however, only in New Mexico, and particularly in the region about Santa Fe, where time has so largely stood still, that this older meaning of

the word persists; and it is only here indeed that one still finds the essence of the original province.

Conquered for Spain in 1540, *Nuevo México* was the center of an old civilization when Fray Marcos de Nizza and Coronado first glimpsed its terraced cities. It was in fact over a well-worn trade route, and because of it — the prehistoric ‘Turquoise Trail’ between Old Mexico and New Mexico — that Coronado made his adventurous march. It was over this trail that the Indians from Mexico came north to barter bright-colored macaw feathers for the sacred blue-green stones of the Pueblos — each equally prized for ceremonial uses. Looking southwest from Santa Fe, across the pinyon-spotted desert, one sees the small conically shaped ‘Turquoise’ hill which was, and still is for the Indians to-day, the principal source of supply. Hence the significance of both the title and the sub-title of this book. . . .

The first poets of New Mexico are, of course, the Indians. How far back their poetic tradition goes, no one knows. Possibly it reaches back to the prehistoric frontier of civilization in

the Southwest — to the 3000 B.C. world of the 'Basket-Makers,' the earliest known desert-dwellers of Arizona and New Mexico, whose traditions are preserved in the ceremonial art forms and in the poetic rituals of the Pueblo Indians.

This great fund of primitive Indian poetry, orally transmitted for untold generations, and now in large measure recorded, is not, however, merely a dead-letter contribution, but a vital, contemporary expression of the soil. On the common ground of poetry, indeed, the living Indian poets and the Anglo-American poets of New Mexico now meet in friendly contact; and the influence of this primitive verse and thought on the later poets is obvious.

Historically, also, New Mexico represents a first frontier, so far as poetry is concerned. For what other State can boast a full-fledged Homer whose work is, incidentally, an authentic basis of history? The *Historía de la Nueva México*, by Capitan Gaspar Perez de Villagra, a long poem in thirty-two cantos published in Spain in 1610, celebrates the conquest and settlement of New Mexico by Don Juan de Oñate; and the events narrated in its heroic measures were

participated in by the author some dozen years before the date of publication. Villagra, according to competent authorities, is to be admired as a virtuoso, rather than emulated as a poet. Nevertheless, his achievement is conspicuous as an indication of that myriad-natured energy which created the Golden Age of Literature in Spain, and expended itself as well in the exploration and conquest of the New World.

Atmospherically, in many respects, New Mexico is still a remote outpost and survival of that transplanted Golden Age of Spain in the United States. Spanish folk-songs and poems are still sung and composed. Spanish Miracle and Nativity plays are still performed. *Penitente* hymns, sung during Lent, and recorded for such use in well-thumbed copy-books, have the haunting sadness, the characteristic fatalism, of the race. They have also, I am told, unmistakable earmarks of fifteenth-century versification.

A third native source of poetry in New Mexico is found in the cowboy songs of the past half-century. Anonymous for the most part, these night-herding songs of the cattle

range form an important contribution to the indigenous poetry of the soil — the first contribution in English.

It is not, however, the purpose of this collection to present literal translations of Spanish folk-plays or poems, or of aboriginal verse, or anonymous cowboy songs, which have been collected elsewhere, but, rather, to show how much the traditional background and the soil itself have influenced the work of contemporary poets in New Mexico. An influence of this sort is largely accidental, or incidental to creative expression. No lyric poet sets out to celebrate more than himself. But the subliminal influences of soil and atmosphere inevitably affect the expression of any poet or artist who, consciously or unconsciously, is submerged in a new environment — particularly when that environment is as strange as it is new, as liberating as it is primal. Something of this sort has been happening to poets in New Mexico during the past decade, and this collection is merely a record of that happening.

Alice Corbin Henderson

Santa Fe

January 27, 1928

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To *The Forge* for 'Matrix,' by Lucy Sturges.

To *The Laughing Horse* for 'Yellow,' by Willard Johnson; 'Cow-Ponies,' by Maurice Lese-
mann; and 'The Years,' by William Haskell
Simpson.

To *The Measure* for 'Compass,' by Lucy Sturges.

To *The Midland* for 'Prayer-Wands,' by Alice Corbin, and 'Poems from a Desert Garden,' by Haniel Long.

To the *Nation* for 'An Adobe House,' by Witter Bynner.

To the *New Republic* for 'New Mexican Desert,' by Witter Bynner.

To the *Old Santa Fe Association* for 'Admonition,' by Margaret Pond.

To *Palms* for 'The Living Root,' by Willard Johnson, and 'Morning Walk: Santa Fe,' by Lynn Riggs.

To *Pan* for 'Navajo Legend,' by Willard Johnson.

To *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse*, for 'Campo Santo at San Juan,' by Mary Austin; 'The Festival of the Corn,' by Marsden Hartley; 'Litany,' by Paul Horgan; 'Interior,' by Willard Johnson; 'Indian Sky,' by Alfred Kreymsborg; 'Ranchers,' and 'Dark Rain: New Mexico,' by Maurice Lesemann; 'False Start,' by Mabel Dodge Luhan; 'Navajo,' by William Haskell Simpson; 'The Silent Days,' 'The Little Deity Alone in the Desert,' and 'The Solitude of Glass,' by Yvor Winters.

To the *Southwest Review* for 'Primal,' by Haniel Long; and 'Desert Night,' by Willard Johnson.

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THE TURQUOISE TRAIL

Alice Corbin Henderson.

THE TURQUOISE TRAIL



MARY AUSTIN

CAMPO SANTO AT SAN JUAN

COME where the mesa's lion-colored paws
Set back the lordly Rio to the west,
And I will show you sleep!

Set round are magic mountains, blue on blue,
That thin to wreathing veils and are exhaled
By the out-breathing spirit of the universe
In pulse of lilac light;
Between them high stretched mesas, tombé
tight,

Whereon the gods
Drum sullen thunder these hot afternoons
Till the plumed clouds come up like eagles
Dun feathered, edged with white,
With arrow lightnings sheathèd in their claws.

A bow shot nearer to the mesa's edge,
Pale huts that drink the sun.

Long after dark their walls give back warm
 tones,
The wine of light.
Five centuries and more these walls
Have been drawn out of dust by women's
 hands —
They too have drunk the sun, are dusky with
 it,
Their white teeth give secret flashes, and their
 eyes,
The very fibers of their blankets sparkle
Clear red and yellow like stained glass.

Sit here by the *Cacique's* house
And watch Lupita plastering a wall
With dust that was some mother's son,
Mixed with the rain that fell, how many times!
As women's tears.
This was their life;
A wind that rose and struggled with the dust
And stilled to dust again.

Such changes came as overtake
These same stark mesas in a season's range;
Mere bloom of use and custom
Our unregardful time has blown away.

Where once the prayer plume and the cloud
 compelling drum
Circled the pregnant fields,
The five *fiscales* bear the village Saint,
And still for rain the six Corn Maidens dance
Round Mary Virgin in the market place.

And then, their little dust makes room
For the crêpe-petalled argemoney,
A potsherd and a penciled word
Amado . . . loved . . .

If dust could feel, their dust has but come home
To herd grass and to painted cup,
To crisping frost and slender footed rain,
The great Lord Sun returning from the south
Clad in white beads and shell shield glittering.
Full fed of life, what need
To set a beggar's bowl for crusts
To round the measure of identity.

O come, and I will show you sleep!

STANDING GUARD

FIRST WATCH

WHEN the light is slant and low
And the evening winds are loose,
Then the cowboy slacks his hand,
Tired upon the tired cayuse.
When the light is slant and low
And the windy torrents flow
Down the slopes of purple shadow,
Then the rein drops on the sand,
And the hungry cattle go,
Eager cropping in the meadow,
And the yellow camp-fire's glow
Through the tender, glooming shadow
Blooms across the darkling land.

In the fore-watch of the night
When awakes no beast or bird,
Wide about the guarding ground
Mills the stubborn, anxious herd.
When above the dregs of night
In a swirling froth of light
Stars beyond the stars are hiding,
Then the cowboy beats his round,
And the dragging hours to slight.

Sings to cheer his lonely riding;
Sings the shapes of fear to flight,
Till some lone coyote hiding
Wakes a chorus to the sound.

SECOND WATCH

In the dusky noon of sleep
When the moaning herd is down,
There's a formless fear that flies
Whimpering round the guarding ground;
Where the kneeling cattle sleep
There's a viewless fright a-creep
Fit to wake the earthquake thunder
That from plain and plunging steep
Flies along the crouching skies,
From the pounding hoofbeats under:
Keen the watch the riders keep
Lest they wake the stampede thunder
And the viewless fear that flies.

There's a flaming planet wheels
In the lagging, lesser hours
When before the early chill
In his seat the rider cowers;
White the morning planet wheels,
Sick for sleep the cowboy reels,

Saddle-weary and yet riding,
When the sun-dawn smites the hill
And the murk of midnight steals
To its lair of shadow, hiding,
When the morning freshness heals
All the ills of night-long riding,
And the bedded herd is still.

THE EAGLE'S SONG

SAID the Eagle:
I was astonished
When I heard that there was death.

My home, alas,
Must I leave it!
All beholding summits,
Shall I see you no more!

North I went,
Leaning on the wind;
Through the forest resounded
The cry of the hunted doe.

East I went,
Through the hot dawning;
There was the smell of death in my nostrils.

South I went, seeking
The place where there is no death.
Weeping I heard
The voice of women
Wailing for their children.

West I went,
On the encompassing water;
Death's trail was before me.
People, O people,
Needs be that we must die!

Therefore let us make
Songs together.
With a twine of songs to bind us
To the middle Heaven,
The white way of souls.
There we shall be at rest,
With our songs
We shall roam no more!

S. OMAR BARKER

IF EVER YOU GO RIDING

IF ever you go riding on the road through
Lincoln town,
Where the cottonwoods are ancient and the old
adobes brown,
Draw rein until the sun has left his saddle in
the sky
To make his camp in tarp of gold; until coyótes
cry
From dim, clump-shadowed cactus hills to
beckon up the moon,
And through the sombre cottonwoods white
silence follows soon.

Wait by the crumbling courthouse wall until
its bullet scars
Are vague rosettes of nothingness beneath the
leaf-veiled stars;
Until the dust of 'dobes where the Kid's
redonda stood,
No longer in the darkness shows the rust of
dead men's blood;

Until the oldest Juánico, with pictures in his
head

Of far, forgotten nights and days, lies sleeping
in his bed.

Then soundless down that ancient street, your
eyes are like to see

A horseman come to phantom shape from
shadows of a tree.

And like the drum-beat of a dream, a slender
whispered thing,

Your ears may hear a thud of hoofs in ghostly
galloping:

Along that road where other years knew gun-
smoke, sudden death,

The moon sees only village peace, no other stir
than breath

Of wind that lifts the quiet leaves — yet from
some haunted hiding,

One harried, hurried horseman in the night
comes riding . . . riding.

WITTER BYNNER

ONE OF THESE DAYS

It was one of those mornings when merely
taking a step,
Lifting a cup of coffee to the lips,
Striking a match to light a cigarette,
Had something in it of expectancy:
When spring was not a season, but an hour,
And any gesture at all was an opening leaf. . . .

The cigarette-fume whispered to me little words
Of unrecorded favour. And the air,
Against my forehead as I walked, was as fresh
As a dewy wreath in summer. Even clothes,
That had interfered always with life, came on
me now
Like waves along a yielding, mingling edge . . .

I was the wave and sand and wind of a whole
day,
I was time and tide, and I was everything.

I saw familiar faces, broken pieces
Of glass, two or three dogs, a motor-car . . .

And always, fusing them all, I saw an arrow
Of fire, a tiny lightning for my veins:

Fences were wands, waving their hindrance
aside;

Fields mothered me, as they mother a rolling
pony;

Valleys were holding each of my pebbly atoms;
And, even as high as I could reach, were peaks
Of mountains leaning this way and that, to ease
Not something in themselves but something in
me

Too great to be contained in any mould,
Too happy to be put aside, alone,
From any other form in all the world . . .

Till suddenly, at twilight, the gray rock
On which I sat became a rock again:
Though touching me, it was away from me;
I was no more a centaur, nor a stone;
And when I seized up water from a brook
And flung it over me, it drained and was cold;
And the earth that I was clasping in my hands
Dribbled and only clung to me as dirt,
Till it was rinsed and wrung in the passing
brook.

The day went out of me. With a final sign,
It left me to myself. I saw it go
Into the leaves, I saw it for a moment,
Where a bluebird rippled heaven through a
pine.

NEW MEXICAN DESERT

A VIVID hardened ocean,
A rough arrested sea,
On its imagined motion
Had so conjured me
That I was the only one not dead. . . .
Till, slowly up a wave ahead,
With a moon of a hat to know him by
And a wizard's blanket marked with red,
And his toes outswung from a burro,
Arose a man more thorough
In the uses of magic than I;
And he sang a song, and he sang it still
When, shaking like heat to the top of the hill,
He vanished through the open light
Out of the desert, out of sight,
Into the solid sky.

AN ADOBE HOUSE

IN a house born of the brown earth
And dying back to earth again,
Without any desire to be more than earth
And without any particular pain,
Beside an acequia bringing water
To the corn not yet tall,
Three men were sitting with poems on their knees
And they heard the wind rise and fall.
And one of them heard his own voice rising,
And one of them heard his own voice falling,
And the other heard only the summons of the
 wind
And wondered where it was calling.

A SPRING SUMMONS

THE willows at San Felipe
With their leaning branches
Have drawn the green of earth up through the
 air.

One little child by himself in the wide plaza
Tosses a ball into the air.
And on the high mesa, old holy adobes
Bless the air on its way from heaven . . .

Come, my friend,
To the capital of mountains and tomorrows,
Where the sunny blood is cool with snow
In a forgiven world.

A DANCE FOR RAIN

YOU may never see rain, unless you see
A dance for rain at Cochiti,
Never hear thunder in the air
Unless you hear the thunder there,
Nor know the lightning in the sky
If there's no pole to know it by —
They dipped the pole just as I came,
And I can never be the same
Since those feathers gave my brow
The touch of wind that's on it now,
Bringing over the arid lands
Butterfly gestures from Hopi hands
And holding me, till earth shall fail
As close to earth as a fox's tail.

I saw them, naked, dance in line
Before the candles of a leafy shrine;
Before a saint in a Christian dress
I saw them dance their holiness,

I saw them reminding him all day long
That death is weak and life is strong
And urging the fertile earth to yield
Seed from the loin and seed from the field.
A feather in the hair and a shell at the throat
Were lifting and falling with every note
Of the chorus-voices and the drum,
Calling for the rain to come.
A fox on the back, and shaken on the thigh
Rain-cloth woven from the sky,
And under the knee a turtle-rattle
Clacking with the toes of sheep and cattle —
These were the men, their bodies painted
Earthen, with a white rain slanted;
These were the men, a windy line,
Their elbows green with a growth of pine.
And in among them, close and slow,
Women moved the way things grow,
With a mesa-tablet on the head
And a little grassy creeping tread
And with sprays of pine moved back and forth,
While the dance of the men blew from the north,
Blew from the south and east and west
Over the field and over the breast.
And the heart was beating in the drum,
Beating for the rain to come.

Dead men out of earlier lives,
Leaving their graves, leaving their wives,
Were partly flesh and partly clay,
And their heads were corn that was dry and
gray.

They were ghosts of men and once again
They were dancing like a ghost of rain;
For the spirits of men, the more they eat,
Have happier hands and lighter feet,
And the better they dance the better they know
How to make corn and children grow.
And so in Cochiti that day
They slowly put the sun away
And they made a cloud and they made it break
And they made it rain for the children's sake.
And they never stopped the song or the drum
Pounding for the rain to come.

The rain made many suns to shine,
Golden bodies in a line
With leaping feather and swaying pine.
And the brighter the bodies, the brighter the
rain
As thunder heaped it on the plain.
Arroyos had been empty, dry,
But now were running with the sky;

And the dancers' feet were in a lake,
Dancing for the people's sake.
And the hands of a ghost had made a cup
For scooping handfuls of water up;
And he poured it into a ghostly throat,
And he leaped and waved with every note
Of the dancers' feet and the songs of the drum
That had called the rain and made it come.

For this was not a god of wood,
This was a god whose touch was good,
You could lie down in him and roll
And wet your body and wet your soul;
For this was not a god in a book,
This was a god that you tasted and took
Into a cup that you made with your hands,
Into your children and into your lands —
This was a god that you could see,
Rain, rain in Cochiti!

WILLA CATHER

SPANISH JOHNNY

THE old West, the old time,
The old wind singing through
The red, red grass a thousand miles,
And, Spanish Johnny, you!
He'd sit beside the water ditch
When all his herd was in,
And never mind a child, but sing
To his mandolin.

The big stars, the blue night,
The moon-enchanted plain:
The olive man who never spoke,
But sang the songs of Spain.
His speech with men was wicked talk —
To hear it was a sin;
But those were golden things he said
To his mandolin.

The gold songs, the gold stars,
The world so golden then:
And the hand so tender to a child
Had killed so many men.

He died a hard death long ago
Before the Road came in;
The night before he swung, he sang
To his mandolin.

BADGER CLARK

HIGH-CHIN BOB

'WAY high up in the Mokiones, among the
mountain-tops,
A lion cleaned a yearlin's bones and licked his
thankful chops;
When who upon the scene should ride, a-
trippin' down the slope,
But High-Chin Bob of sinful pride and maver-
ick-hungry rope.

*'Oh, glory be to me!' says he, 'an' fame's un-
fadin' flowers,
I ride my good top-hoss to-day and I'm top-hand
of the Lazy-J,
So Kitty-cat, you're ours!*

The lion licked his paws so brown and
dreamed soft dreams of veal,
As High-Chin's loop come circlin' down and
roped him round his meal;
He yowled quick fury to the world and all the
hills yelled back:
That top-hoss give a snort and whirled and
Bob caught up the slack.

'Oh, glory be to me!' says he, 'we'll hit the glory trail.

*No man has looped a lion's head and lived to
drag the bugger dead,
Till I shall tell the tale.'*

'Way high up in the Mokiones that top-hoss
done his best
'Mid whippin' brush and rattlin' stones from
cañon-floor to crest;
Up and down and round and cross Bob
pounded weak and wan,
But pride still glued him to his hoss and glory
drove him on:

*'Oh, glory be to me,' says he, 'this glory trail
is rough,
I'll keep this dally round the horn until the toot
of judgment morn,
Before I holler 'nough!'*

Three suns had rode their circle home beyond
the desert rim
And turned their star herds loose to roam the
ranges high and dim,

And whenever Bob turned and hoped the
limp remains to find,
A red-eyed lion, belly-roped, but healthy,
loped behind!

*'Oh, glory be to me,' says Bob, 'he kain't be
drug to death!
These heroes that I've read about were only fools
that stuck it out
To the end of mortal breath!'*

'Way high up in the Mokiones, if you ever come
there at night,
You'll hear a ruckus amongst the stones that'll
lift your hair with fright;
You'll see a cow-hoss thunder by and a lion
trail along,
And the rider bold, with chin on high, sings
forth his glory song:

*'Oh, glory be to me!' says he, 'and to my mighty
noose!
Oh, pardner, tell my friends below I took a ragin'
dream in tow,
And if I didn't lay him low,—I never turned
him loose!'*

ALICE CORBIN

EL RITO DE SANTA FE

THIS valley is not ours, nor these mountains,

Nor the names we give them — they belong,

They, and this sweep of sun-washed air,

Desert and hill and crumbling earth,

To those who have lain here long years

And felt the soak of the sun

Through the red sand and crumbling rock,

Till even their bones were part of the sun-steeped valley;

How many years we know not, nor what names

They gave to antelope, wolf, or bison,

To prairie dog or coyote

To this hill where we stand,

Or the moon over your shoulder.

Let us build a monument to Time

That knows all, sees all, and contains all,

To whom these bones in the valley are even as
we are:

Even Time's monument would crumble
Before the face of Time,
And be as these white bones
Washed clean and bare by the sun . . .

A SONG FROM OLD SPAIN

WHAT song of mine will live?
On whose lips will the words be sung
Long years after I am forgotten —
A name blown between the hills
Where some goat-herd
Remembers my love and passion?

He will sing of your beauty and my love
Though it may be in another tongue,
To a strange tune,
In a country beyond the seas —
A seed blown by the wind —
He will sing of our love and passion.

IN THE DESERT

I HAVE seen you, O king of the dead,
More beautiful than sunlight.

Your kiss is like quicksilver;
But I turned my face aside
Lest you should touch my lips.

In the field with the flowers
You stood darkly.

My knees trembled, and I knew
That no other joy would be like this.

But the warm field, and the sunlight,
And the few years of my girlhood
Came before me, and I cried,
Not yet!
Not yet, O dark lover!

You were patient.
— I know you will come again.

I have seen you, O king of the dead,
More beautiful than sunlight.

JUAN QUINTANA

THE goat-herd follows his flock
Over the sandy plain,
And the goats nibble the rabbit-bush
Acrid with desert rain.

Old Juan Quintana's coat
Is a faded purple blue,
And his hat is a warm plum-brown,
And his trousers a tawny hue;

He is sunburnt like the hills,
And his eyes have a strange goat-look,
And when I came on him alone,
He suddenly quivered and shook.

Out in the hills all day,
The trees do funny things . . .
And a horse shaped like a man
Rose up from the ground on wings.

And a burro came and stood
With a cross, and preached to the flock,
While old Quintana sat
As cold as ice on a rock.

And sometimes the mountains move,
And the mesa turns about,
And Juan Quintana thinks he's lost,
Till a neighbor hears him shout.

And they say with a little laugh
That he isn't quite right, up here;
And they'll have to get a *muchacho*
To help with the flock next year.

CUNDIYO

As I came down from Cundiyo,
Upon the road to Chimayo
I met three women walking;
Each held a sorrow to her breast,
And one of them a small cross pressed —
Three black-shawled women walking.

'Now why is it that you must go
Up the long road to Cundiyo?'

The old one did the talking:

'I go to bless a dying son.'

'And I a sweetheart never won.'

Three women slowly walking.

The third one opened wide her shawl
And showed a new-born baby small

That slept without a sorrow:

'And I, in haste that we be wed —
Too late, too late, if he be dead!

The Padre comes tomorrow.'

As I went up to Cundiyo,
In the grey dawn from Chimayo,
I met three women walking;
And over paths of sand and rocks
Were men who carried a long box —
Beside three women walking.

EL COYOTITO

(From the Spanish)

WHEN I left Hermosillo
My tears fell like rain,
But the little red flower
Consoled my pain.

I am like the coyote
That rolls them, and goes
Trotting off side-ways
And nobody knows.

The green pine has fallen,
Where the doves used to pair;
Now the black one may find on returning
Little tow-heads with sandy hair!

The adobe is gone
Where my sword hung suspended;

Why worry . . . when everything's
At the last ended?

The adobe is gone
Where my mirror was bright
And the small cedar tree
Is the rabbit's to-night.

The cactus is bare
Where the tunas were sweet;
No longer need you be jealous
Of the women I meet.

Friends, if you see her
In the hills up above,
Don't tell her that I am in prison —
For she is my love.

PRAYER-WANDS

I

I HAVE dreamed of the thunder-birds,
The great ones of the sky.
Riders upon painted horses
Lifted me up.
I was one of them.
We chased the sorrel deer.

Now I am become as the least among you,
As grass on the prairie,
As dust on the earth.
And, lest I grow proud, I strip myself,
And sit naked and dirty
So that the spirit may not forget.

II

Power flows molten
Through veins of metal.

My arrow is keen
With longing.

My song comes from the hills;
It is clean with beauty.

Nothing common or mean
Can hurt my spirit

I have seen the riders
That ride upon thunder birds;
I have spoken with the spirits
Who live in the upper sky.

III

Thinking over the old times gone,
My mind is hard to me.

Earth has a middle, like this stone,
Worn round on the mesa-top
From looking at the sun.

Holding this rock,
My mind pierces inward.

Thinking over the old times gone,
My mind is sorrowful.

The old gods are gone
With our Lost Others.

They descend to the darkness.

My mind follows them,
And soon my body
Burrowing downward and inward
Will come to the Middle World
Where all seeds wait.

ARTHUR DAVISON FICKE

SUNSET

HERE on hills above the sunset
The plains seem green and beautiful, from afar.
The trees stand in rich masses
The river is silver and beautiful in the slanting
light.

No one would believe
That the plain is half-desert
And that the river is only polished rocks
Shining in an alien glow.

CABEZON PEAK

AT Cabezon there rises a mountain
Perpendicular, heroic, out of the grey earth
And it might well be that the will of God
Bade this vast column of granite stand upright
As a witness to His power.

The Indians believed that, once,
And the Spanish peasants of today
Looking out from their doorways,

Believe it still;
But in the blazing light of noon
Or in the purple half-lights of dusk
Many gay or sad men
Pass through Cabezon
And do not believe that.

MOUNTAIN AGAINST MOUNTAIN

CLEAR golden lights
Now touch the western crests
Where mountain rises against mountain.
In the valleys now
At the sad hour of early evening
There is darkness.
The horses stand listless beside the fences.
The cows lie dejected and half-asleep.
The tired women droop beside their stoves.
The tired men drowse beside their plates.
There is no hope left, at this hour,
And no beauty and no wisdom, in the valleys.
Only Venus, tonight the evening-star,
Glimmers miraculous above the sunset,
Above dark crests of mountain against mountain.

WINTER DAY

GREY misty world of snow
Where fluttering to and fro
The clear frost-petals fly
Under a leaden sky —
Into your mists I seem to pass
Through the protecting glass,
And seem myself a snowflake, hurled
By wild winds up and down the world —
Asking of this short hour
Nothing except to feel that power
Which sustains snowflakes till in the end they
 must
Fall down to dust
Having swept half the heavens: I ask no more:
Others have asked a greater gift before,
And yet, for all their pleading, rest not now
Gem-like on any winter-sacred bough.

LOREINE: A HORSE

SHE lifted up her head
With the proud incredible poise
Of beauty recovered
From the Mycenæan tombs.

She opened her nostrils
With the wild arrogance
Of life that knows nothing
Except that it is life.

Her slender legs
Quivered above the soft grass.
Her hard hooves
Danced among the dandelions.

Her great dark eyes
Saw all that could be seen.
Her large lips
Plucked at my coat-sleeve.

The wisdom of the prophets
Vanished into laughter
As Loreine lifted her small foot
And pawed the air.

The learning of the sages
Turned to ribald rubrics
When that proud head
Looked at a passing cloud.

And so, amid this godless
God-hungry generation,
Let us take Loreine
And worship her.

She would demand nothing,
Nor would she utter thunders,
She is living, and real,
And she is beautiful.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

RAIN IN THE DESERT

THE huge red-buttressed mesa over yonder,
Is merely a far-off temple where the sleepy sun
 is burning
Its altar-fires of pinyon and of toyon for the
 day.

The old priests sleep, white-shrouded,
Their pottery whistles lie beside them, the
 prayer-sticks closely feathered;
On every mummied face there glows a smile.

The sun is rolling slowly
Beneath the sluggish folds of the sky-serpents,
Coiling, uncoiling, blue-black, sparked with
 fires.

The old dead priests
Feel in the thin dried earth that is heaped about
 them,
Above the smell of scorching oozing pinyon,
The acrid smell of rain.

And now the showers
Surround the mesa like a troop of silver
dancers:
Shaking their rattles, stamping, chanting,
roaring,
Whirling, extinguishing the last red wisp of
light.

CLIFF-DWELLING

THE canyon is choked with stones and under-
growth;

The heat that falls from the sky
Beats at the walls, slides, and reverberates
Down in a wave of grey dust and white fire;
Stinging the mouth and eyes.

The ponies struggle and scramble,
Half way up, along the canyon wall;
Their listless riders seldom lift
A weary hand to guide their feet;
Stones are loosened and clatter
Down to the sunbaked depths.

Nothing has ever lived here,
Nothing could ever live here;

Two hawks, screaming and wheeling,
Rouse the eyes to look aloft.
Boldly poised in a shelf of the stone,
Tiny walls peer down on us;
Towers with little square windows.

When we plod up to them,
And, dismounting, fasten our horses;
Suddenly a blue-grey flock of doves
Burst in a flutter of wings from the shadows.

Shards of pots and shreds of straw,
Empty brush-roofed rooms in darkness;
And the sound of water tinkling,
A clock that ticks the centuries off to silence.

THE WINDMILLS

THE windmills, like great sunflowers of steel,
Lift themselves proudly over the straggling
houses;
And at their feet the deep blue-green alfalfa
Cuts the desert like the stroke of a sword.

Yellow melon flowers
Crawl beneath the withered peach-trees;

A date-palm throws its heavy fronds of steel
Against the scoured metallic sky.

The houses, double-roofed for coolness,
Cower amid the manzanita scrub.
A man with jingling spurs
Walks heavily out of a vine-bowered door-
way,
Mounts his pony, rides away.

The windmills stare at the sun.
The yellow earth cracks and blisters.
Everything is still.

In the afternoon
The wind takes dry waves of heat and tosses
them
Mingled with dust, up and down the streets,
Against the belfry with its green bells:

And, after sunset, when the sky
Becomes a green and orange fan,
The windmills, like great sunflowers on dried
stalks,
Stare hard at the sun they cannot follow.

Turning, turning, forever turning
In the chill night-wind that sweeps over the
 valley,
With the shriek and the clank of the pumps
 groaning beneath them,
And the choking gurgle of tepid water.

JOHN GALSWORTHY

DESERT SONG

WHEN I came on from Santa Fe,
The desert road by night and day,
The desert wilds ran far and free
Beneath the wind of desert sea.

But — ah! my heart! — to know again
The scent of rain, the scent of rain!

And I'd in fancy scale the air
Beyond those yellow mountains bare,
And so with dizzy bird survey
A thousand miles of shining day.

But — oh! my heart! — to feel again
The wet of rain, the wet of rain!

And wakeful all the night I'd lie
And watch the dark infinity,
And count the stars that wheel and spin,
And drink the frosty ether in;
And I would hear the desert song
That silence sings the whole night long,

And day by day the whisper pass
Of parching heat through desert grass.

But — oh! my heart! — to hear again
The drip of rain, the drip of rain!

When I rode on from Santa Fe,
That desert road by night and day,
There came at last a little sigh,
A puff of white across the sky.

And — ah! my heart! — I knew again
The scent of rain, the scent of rain!

MARSDEN HARTLEY

THE FESTIVAL OF THE CORN

(The dance is given on the fête-day of Santo Domingo. The saint's wooden image having been venerated in the church of the pueblo, the procession now emerges, carrying it into the plaza.)

DANCE, Domingo, dance!
Give him a leaf of corn in his hand;
Rub him with blue corn-juice —
His legs, his hands, his arms.

The black horse and the ochre horse
Were prancing on the front wall
Of the little mission.
The dark red boy sat upon the roof,
Waiting for the first gunshot
To strike the hammer on the bell.

With ribbons they brought together
The new brides and bridegrooms of the year.

Fantastically they rose from the kiva,
The koshare; with cornhusks on their heads,
Cornhusks of the year that is gone;
Rabbit's fur for girdles;

Orange corn for necklaces.
Turtle-shells, sea-shells, and ox-toes
Made music like juvenile xylophones
In the wind.
Their bodies were naked but for the breech-
cloth.

Dance, Domingo, dance!
Give him a leaf of corn in his hand:
Rub him with blue corn-juice — his legs,
His hands, his arms.

They came with the shot of the gun
From the church, bearing Domingo
Under a blue calico canopy:
Priests in robes, acolytes in overalls,
Little red acolytes with bluebottle hair.

From the kiva-side the drums began to beat:
Men of the chorus were gathering.
They sang in unison, resembling old choir-
boys
In the organ-loft of the mountain-tops.

One by one the youths of the Domingos
Came up out of the kiva's mouth,

Beautiful as young girls at maypole time;
Their hair combed and oiled with bear's oil
All the way to their waists.
Jet, with the reflection
Of eagles' eyes upon it;
Jet, with morning blisses reflected;
Black rivers of young hair, striped with rows
of blue corn.

A girl, a boy, a girl, a boy, a girl.
A man, a boy, a man, a boy, a man.
Long lines of wondrous dark flesh
Turning toward the ash-gold dancing-place.

Pom, pom, pom, pom, pom, pom, pom:
The rawhide drum was muttering, as the ma-
caw
Feathers of the ceremonial rod waved
In the summer wind.
Crimson macaw-tails, and a coyote's skin
Were trembling to the aria of the young corn.

They sat him down, the still Domingo
Of the wooden soul and the stove-pipe halo,
Gilded with store bronze.

Give him a leaf of corn in his hand —
Let him dance!
Dance, Domingo, dance!
Jesus won't care,
For a little while.

Up the long plaza step by step, with red-man
 syncopations
In their ears, their red feet trod the way,
 coercing
The adolescent corn.
They want the young corn-breasts to fill with
 young milk;
They want the ear to hang heavy with orange
 and blue milk.

It is you they are singing for, young corn! It is
 for you they are dancing, the red young
 bodies flushing with an old flame of the
 sunset. The red of the west is coming up
 out of their loins, up out of their boyish
 and girlish breast-flanks. Red sparks
 are falling from their carved lips.

Dance, Domingo, dance!
Rock the young Jesus to sleep.

Lay him down under a candle.

He'll drowse and fall to dreams with the thud-
thud

Of the beautiful red feet on an ash-gold earth.

Green corn-leaves, evergreen leaves, ox-toes,
turtle-shells, sea-shells, and young bells
ringing at their knees. There's the pa-
gan hymn for the ragged Christ-child.

Mary is picking field-flowers on the edge of her
blue robe, behind the adobe wall of the
church. Domingo sits under his calico
canopy waiting for oblations. You,
lovely red boy, pick the paint from his
cheeks, and let the old smile through
to the sun. The sun will crush his lips.
Domingo wants to dance, children of
the flaming west.

Domingo opens his wooden eyes.

Beat of the tom-tom in my ears! Thud-thud
of multitudinous red feet on my solar
plexus! Red fire burning my very eye-
lids with young red heats! The last saps

of the red-man are pouring down my thighs and arms. The young red blood is dripping from the flanks of laughing red bodies aching with the sensuousness of the passing pagan hour.

The blue milk is rising in the cornfields. Can't you hear it rising like new fountains from the old mother breast? Can't you see the little trees of blue milk spreading their branches on the sunlit air?

Sky-blue and corn-blue are mingling
Their kisses like the rainbow edges
Of a whirling spectroscope.
Blue prisms dangling from red bodies —
Blue corn-juice dripping, drop by drop,
Over the edge of luscious young red lips.

The mother is granting her favors. The father is blessing his corn-children with celestial fermentations. Blue milk is rising from the ground; pouring up through the cornstalk fountains; dripping from young corn-leaves. Red lips are spreading trumpet-flowers — ready to catch the corn-juice as it falls.

Statures are increasing. The red-man boy is
growing an inch taller before my eyes.
Something is coming up out of his ruddy
breast and thighs and arms.

Something is reaching out over him.
It is the blue corn-juice
His mother is pouring over him.
Soon — there will be ribbons of new
Marriages stretched in front of the altar rail.
The old choristers are singing
In the organ-loft of the mountain-tops.
All the valleys are in unison with the thud-thud
Of multitudinous red feet.

The Jesus-child is smiling under the candle
At the feet of Domingo of the wooden cheeks.

I saw you dance, Domingo. I saw them rub
blue corn-juice on your legs, and hands,
and feet. I saw you step down from out
the candle branches. I saw your heavy
feet grow light when the red boy smiled
you away from your calico canopy.

Dream, little Jesus-child! The sunlight from
little candles helps the pagan dream.

The red boy laughs your grief away —
with his young luscious body. The
fountain is filled with the blue juice of
the corn.

Domingo nods with heaviness again:
Straighten my stovepipe halo once more;
Take up the posts of my calico canopy;
Carry me to the altar again —
Back to the Nottingham-lace curtains,
And the blue robes of Mary.
The Jesus-child is waking.
Stick the old pap in his mouth —
The pap with the milk that is grey.

PAUL HORGAN

LITANY!

MOON filling the night with green,
Suckle the mesa, flat and lean.

Ave Maria, Madre de Dios.

Candles holding my body so still,
Guide the traveler over the hill.

Ave Maria, Madre de Dios.

Flowers my hands now cherishing,
Come back without me in early spring.

Ave Maria, Madre de Dios.

Tears over me so silently shedding,
Flow again brightly at the next wedding.

Ave Maria, Madre de Dios.

Son, sitting quietly here by my side,
Go forth tomorrow with Joy for your bride.

Ave Maria, Madre de Dios.

WILLARD JOHNSON

YELLOW

WE drove out miles this afternoon
To see the yellow in the woods:
Mountain-sides of aspen.

And when the eye is tuned
To yellow and when autumn
Warms the very air with gold,
Who can see crimson or distant blues?
Each moment that I watched
A flock of magpies
Making a design,
Or glanced aside to note
An old rose window frame,
I saw instead
Chamisa, finger-tipped with saffron,
Or even sage, blooming to yellow,
Or dust, touched by the sun,
Or the road itself, unwinding itself;
And remembered that we had driven miles
To see the yellow in the woods.

Mountain-sides of aspen only?
There bloomed a daisy still
Against an adobe wall as yellow as the road;
Here a stubble-field where grain had ripened,
And under the shelter of a yellow hay-cock
A girl in a lemon-coloured dress.
Wheat before and during and after threshing;
Corn, leaning in the wind as fodder,
Drying on a wall as food,
Scattered on the ground as shucks:
Yellow, everything.
This stone, this parched hill,
This halo around the holy head
Of Jesus in an ancient church,
And the nimbus, glowing in the sun,
Around the tow-head of a boy.
Even the yellow glint of iris
In the eye of an old woman.

Yellow, reminder of fruit
Piled beneath canopies
In Mexican markets:
Bananas, limes, pitayas;
Reminder of sunsets and of stars,
Of moons, suns, planets and every straw
That ever broke a yellow desert camel's back.

Yellow of sunrise
Of jewelry, of pirate gold;
Yellow background of a painting of Salome,
Yellow parchment of an ancient tome
And a story written by O. Henry
On cheap, yellow copy-paper.

Yellow Chinese silk and Chinamen themselves.
Sallow skin of scholars in dark libraries;
Sunlight on the ocean, golden dreams,
And saffron cake made by Cornishmen
In California mining towns.

Yellow, chrome, cadmium, canary —
Synonyms, suggestions . . .
A novel by Aldous Huxley,
And one by Oppenheim;
The Yellow Book and sunflowers,
Kansas and yellow journals,
Honey, butter and yellow-jackets,
Canary cottage, cages and circus-wagons:
Whole worlds of flaming yellow fire —
And oblivion, yellow with the dust of ages!

. . . We drove out miles this afternoon
To see the yellow in the woods:
Mountain-sides of aspen.

NAVAJO LEGEND

Is it true, mother, that the mountain sun,
The silver-studded day,
Is a laughing horse and a blue stallion
As the old men say?

It is certainly true, my son; the desert
Is dusty with hoof-beats and noise
Of galloping chargers straddled and girt
By god-like boys!

INTERIOR

I WONDERED if I were a chair myself,
Or perhaps just a *serape*
Thrown down carelessly,
Dragging on the floor . . .

I wasn't thinking, only sitting,
And there seemed no difference
Between me and the table
Except that the table had four legs
Browner than my two
And the table's face
Reflected the light
More vividly than mine.

The little carving on the wooden stand
Was more beautiful than I am
And the painting on the wall
Was more alive,
And the book beside me
Was more intelligent,
And the electric light brighter,
And the pillow and the piano
And the paper-weight
And the flowers in the vase
And the rugs —
Everything was more something.

Surely the curtains at the window
Can see the moon rise
And an automobile
With green eye-lids
Come up the street,
And Mars approaching
With a bloody twinkle . . .

Surely the piano can remember
The girl with auburn hair
Who played the tune she said
Was popular in St. Louis.
And what chair could forget

That a fat man sat upon it
Through an evening?

Yes, I must be a chair,
Or a *serape*, or a rug.
I seem to remember
The nail the carpenter used
To mend my broken arm;
And I can recall the hollow shock
Each time the weaver
Put his foot upon the pedal
Of his loom, repairing me;
But at the same time
I feel the pleasant thrill
Of a girl shaking me
In the sunlight.

And all the while I know
That I am nothing in the room
But all of it.
That I am here not only now
But have always been here.
I am confused and timeless:
Is this a *pelado's* poor adobe,
Or has an artist
Remodelled it into a studio?

Do I see a barren cot
In that corner instead of cushions and a couch,
Or is this tomorrow
Instead of yesterday?

I seem to have sat here a hundred years,
Waiting for an explanation of it all.
And yet I came in only an hour ago
To sit quietly .
And to be alone . . .

DESERT NIGHT

WALKING

Under the moon,
Conscious of something deep
Beneath the calm — like life itself
Breathing in its sleep . . .

THE LIVING ROOT

I PAUSED and stepped back, half entranced,
Through the darkness of the alley-way,
As naked Indians gravely danced
Into the plaza where the moonlight lay.

When they had passed, I waited there
And listened to the drum and shout
Die slowly into shaken air;
And then I sighed and turned about

To find between me and the wall
That held the alley's deepest shade
An Indian standing, still and tall,
So near me that I felt afraid.

He was a part of silence and of night,
And when I tried I could not see
His eyes flash any glint of light.
. . . I passed him as I would a tree.

HENRY HERBERT KNIBBS

THE LONE RED ROCK

A SONG of the range, an old-time song,
To the patter of pony's feet,
That he used to sing as we rode along,
In the hush of the noonday heat:

'Follow me out where the cattle graze,
Where the morning shadows fall,
On the far, dim trails of the outland ways
That lead through the chaparral.'

There, where the red butte stands alone,
And the brush dies down to sand,
Is the name of a friend — a mound of stone,
And the sweep of this lonesome land.

His name is there, and a word or two,
And the brand that we used to run;
But his name could never mean much to you,
And the old, glad days are done.

'Follow me out where the free sons ride,
Where the young coyotes play;

Where the call of the quail from the mountain-
side

Comes out of the morning gray.'

'Follow me out' — a laugh, a word,
In the dust of the roundup, when
His horse went down in the milling herd,
A break in the haze — and then;

I dragged him free, and he tried to smile,
But his gaze was dim with Night;
'I'll rest by the butte a little while . . .'
And the bronze of his face went white.

So a singer rode in the sunlit space,
Past yucca and ridge and stone,
And a shadow with him, pace for pace,
His own, yet not his own.

RAIN-MAKERS

WHERE the rattler coils in the yucca shade
and the lizard's hue is bright,
Where the riven sandstone holds the heat
through the hours of the desert night,

South and South of the Hopi line, South of the
Navajo,
The shattered walls of a ruin stand — a village
of long ago.

A puncher seeking a water-hole that his thirsty
horse might drink,
Reined to the edge of the salt-white glare on
the rim of a desert sink,
Gazed at the ruins banked with sand as he
topped a rounded rise,
And a vision of ancient Hopi Land grew clear
in his steady eyes.

The arrowhead, the painted shard, and the ash
of a vanished flame;
Roofs long fallen that choked the rooms — a
village without a name . . .
He thought of the hopes and joys and fears that
this patient people knew,
Lost in the vagrant sweep of years, believing
their gods were true.

‘They prayed for rain,’ the puncher said, ‘and
I reckon if I knew how,
I’d rustle a little prayer myself, for we sure need
rain right now;

And here are the deer and turkey bones which
shows that they liked their meat,
And here are some busted grinding-stones for
the corn they used to eat.'

Then he found a bead, a turquoise bead, bright
blue on the littered sand,
And he pictured a dusky Hopi girl, a beauty of
Hopi Land,
When the long-dry cañon river-bed was cool
with a crystal flow,
And she swayed to the brimming *olla's* weight
on the footworn trail below.

What if the puncher went to sleep in the shade
of the ruin wall,
While his pony dozed in the noonday sun with
the blue sky over all?
What if he saw the Hopi folk do a primitive
rain-prayer dance,
With symbol of turtle, snake and gourd and the
lightning's broken lance?

Then the far hills shouldered a thunder-head,
the light grew dim and strange,
A shaft of blue went hurtling through and
echoed from range to range;

The puncher opened his sleepy eyes and gazed
at the distant plain,
A storm-black line on the desert rim, and the
welcome tang of rain.

He thought of his homestead down the creek
and the cracked and thirsty earth,
He thought of his cattle, gaunt and weak in the
season's draught and dearth;
The withered truck in his garden-patch that
fought with the summer heat,
As he sniffed the rain, the saving rain, and its
smell was cool and sweet.

Snug in his shack he made a fire, had supper
and rolled a smoke,
Doorway open he viewed the storm and vi-
sioned the Hopi folk . . .
Searched his pockets to find a match and found
in his hand instead,
The thin blue ring of a turquoise bead and a
jet-black arrowhead.

BURRO

BELOVED burro of the ample ear,
Philosopher, gray hobo of the dunes,

Delight of children, thistle-chewing seer,
From Lebanon and eld, how many moons?

Muse of Mañana: sturdy foe of haste;
True to yourself in every attitude;
A statue of dejection, shaggy-faced,
Or plodding with your pack of cedar-wood;

Stopping to turn about, with motion stiff,
As though you half imagined something wrong;
Wondering if you were there complete, or if
The other half forgot to come along.

What melancholy thoughts bestir your heart
When, like an ancient pump, you lift a tone,
Lose it and lift another — with an art
Bequeathed to none on earth, save you alone?

Your melody means something deep, unseen;
Desert contralto you are called: perchance
An ear attuned to mysteries might glean
More from your song than simply assonance.

You sing the truth, without a touch of guile:
And truth were sad enough — yet your fond
guise

Of bland sincerity provokes a smile,
And so the world is richer — burro-wise.

Thus do you serve twofold, in that you please
That subtle sense that loves the ludicrous
Nor scorns affection. Oh, Demosthenes
Of Andalusia, left to preach to us!

Dogging the shadows of some empty street,
Content with what your indolence may find,
You let the world roll on, and keep your feet,
Or let it run, and still you stray behind.

LONE WOLF'S LODGE

THUS spake the Lone Wolf, thus and never
 turning
From the picture that he made on the cañon
 rim:
'Out across the Sand Hills my father's fires are
 burning,
Out across the Sand Hills, desolate and dim.'

Floating in a pony's mane he drew an eagle
 feather,
Drew a lodge of bison-hide laced with many
 thongs:

Said: 'My brother, when we go, we'll take the
trail together,
I shall paint my pictures and you shall sing
your songs.'

Straightway I answered him: 'Name, and I will
follow,
I will ride my white horse and you will ride the
roan,
Even to the Sand Hills, over ridge and hollow,
Brothers, we, on many trails, then why the last
alone?'

Softly laughed the Lone Wolf: slowly by his
magic
Color followed color and the desert of his sires
Grew upon the canvas, desolate and tragic,
And out across the Sand Hills gleamed their
hunting fires.

He painted then a low moon whose silver ar-
rows slanted,
Burning on a white horse, burning on a roan:
Turning from his picture the Lone Wolf
chanted:
'Brothers, we, on many trails, then why the
last alone?'

Fragrant were the tall pines, pleasant was the
weather,

Where we shared the hide-lodge laced with
many a thong:

Silent in the lodge door we gazed afar together:
He had made a picture, and I had made a song.

ALFRED KREYMBORG

INDIAN SKY

THE old squaw
Is one
With the old stone behind her.
Both have squatted there —
Ask mesa
Or mountain how long?
The bowl she holds —
Clay shawl of her art,
Clay ritual of her faith —
Is one
With the thought of the past,
And one with the now;
Though dim, a little old, strange.
The earth holds her
As she holds the bowl —
Ask kiva
Or shrine how much longer?
No titan,
No destroyer,
No future thought,
Can part

Earth and this woman,
Woman and bowl:
The same shawl
Wraps them around.

D. H. LAWRENCE
MEN IN NEW MEXICO

MOUNTAINS blanket-wrapped
Round a white hearth of desert —

While the sun goes round
And round and round the desert,
The mountains never get up and walk about.
They can't, they can't wake.

They camped and went to sleep
In the last twilight
Of Indian gods;
And they can't wake.

Indians dance and run and stamp —
No good.
White men make gold-mines and the mountains
unmake them
In their sleep.

The Indians laugh in their sleep
From fear,
Like a man when he sleeps and his sleep is over,
and he can't wake up,

And he lies like a log and screams and his
scream is silent
Because his body can't wake up;
So he laughs from fear, pure fear, in the grip of
the sleep.

A dark membrane over the will, holding a man
down
Even when the mind has flickered awake;
A membrane of sleep, like a black blanket.
We walk in our sleep, in this land,
Somnambulist-wide-eyed afraid.

We scream for someone to wake us
And our scream is soundless in the paralysis of
sleep,
And we know it.

The Penitentes lash themselves till they run
with blood
In their efforts to come awake for one moment;
To tear the membrane of this sleep . . .
No good.

The Indians thought the white man would
awake them . . .

And instead, the white men scramble asleep in
the mountains,
And ride on horseback asleep forever through
the desert,
And shoot one another, amazed and mad with
somnambulism,
Thinking death will awaken something . . .
No good.

Born with a caul,
A black membrane over the face,
And unable to tear it
Though the mind is awake.

Mountains blanket-wrapped
Round the ash-white hearth of the desert;
And though the sun leaps like a thing unleashed
in the sky
They can't get up, they are under the blanket.

AUTUMN AT TAOS

OVER the rounded sides of the Rockies, the
aspens of autumn,
The aspens of autumn
Like yellow hair of a tigress brindled with pine.

Down on my hearth-rug of desert, sage of the
mesa,

An ash-grey pelt

Of wolf all hairy and level, a wolf's wild pelt.

Trot-trot to the mottled foot-hills, cedar-
mottled and piñon:

Did you ever see an otter?

Silvery-sided, fish-fanged, fierce-faced whisk-
ered, mottled.

When I trot my little pony through the aspen
trees of the canyon,

Behold me trotting at ease betwixt the slopes of
the golden

Great and glistening-feathered legs of the hawk
of Horus;

The golden hawk of Horus

Astride above me.

But under the pines

I go slowly

As under the hairy belly of a great black bear.

Glad to emerge and look back

On the yellow, pointed aspen-trees laid one on
another like feathers,

Feather over feather on the breast of the great
and golden
Hawk as I say of Horus.

Pleased to be out in the sage and the pine fish-
dotted foot-hills,
Past the otter's whiskers,
On to the fur of the wolf-pelt that strews the
plain.

And then to look back to the rounded sides of
the squatting Rockies,
Tigress-brindled with aspen,
Jaguar-splashed, puma yellow, leopard-living
slopes of America.

Make big eyes, little pony
At all these skins of wild beasts;
They won't hurt you.
Fangs and claws and talons and beaks and
hawk-eyes
Are nerveless just now.
So be easy.

THE RED WOLF

OVER the heart of the west, the Taos desert,
Circles an eagle,
And it's dark between me and him.

The sun, as he waits a moment, huge and liquid
Standing without feet on the rim of the far-off
mesa

Says: *Look for a last long time then! Look!*
Look well! I am going.

So he pauses and is beholden, and straightway
is gone.

And the Indian, in a white sheet
Wrapped to the eyes, the sheet bound close on
his brows,

Stands saying: *See, I'm invisible!*
Behold how you can't behold me!
The invisible in its shroud!

Now that the sun has gone, and the aspen
leaves

And the cotton-wood leaves are fallen, as good
as fallen,

And the ponies in the corral,
And it's night:

Why, more has gone than all these;
And something has come.
A red wolf stands on the shadow's dark red
rim.

Day has gone to dust on the sage-grey desert
Like a white Christus fallen to dust from a
cross;
To dust, to ash, on the twilit floor of the desert.
And a black crucifix like a dead tree spreading
wings;
Maybe a black eagle with its wings out
Left lonely in the night
In a sort of worship.

And coming down upon us, out of the dark
concave
Of the eagle's wings,
And the coffin-like slit where the Indian's eyes
are,
And the absence of cotton-wood leaves, or of
aspen,
Even the absence of dark-crossed donkeys:
Come tall old demons, smiling
The Indian smile,
Saying: *How do you do, you pale-face?*

I am very well, old demon.
How are you?

*Call me Harry if you will,
Call me Old Harry, says he.
Or the abbreviation of Nicholas,
Nick, Old Nick, maybe.*

Well, you're a dark old demon,
And I'm a pale-face like a homeless dog
That has followed the sun from the dawn
 through the east
Trotting east and east and east till the sun him-
 self went home,
And left me homeless here in the dark at your
 door.
How do you think we'll get on,
Old demon, you and I?

*You and I, you pale-face
Pale-face you and I
Don't get on.*

Mightn't we try?

*Where's your God, you white one?
Where's your white God?*

He fell to dust as the twilight fell,
Was fume as I trod
The last step out of the east.

*Then you're a lost white dog of a pale-face,
And the day's now dead . . .*

Touch me carefully, old father,
My beard is red.

*Thin red wolf of a pale-face,
Thin red wolf, go home.*

I have no home, old father.
That's why I come.

We take no hungry stray from the pale-face . . .

Father, you are not asked.
I am come. I am here. The red dawn wolf
Sniffs round your place.
Lifts up his voice and howls to the walls of the
pueblo,
Announcing he's here.

*The dogs of the dark pueblo
Have long fangs . . .*

Has the red wolf trotted east and east and east,
From the far, far other end of the day
To fear a few fangs?

Across the pueblo river
That dark old demon and I
Thus say a few words to each other.

And wolf, he calls me, and red.
I call him no names.
He says, however, he is Star-Road.
I say, he can go back the same gait.

As for me . . .
Since I trotted at the tail of the sun as far as
 ever the creature went east,
And lost him here,
I'm going to sit down on my tail right here
And wait for him to come back with a new story.
I'm the red wolf, says the dark old father.
All right, the red dawn wolf I am.

MAURICE LESEMANN

COW-PONIES

AFTER we'd turned in they gathered round
Nosing our blankets and stepping about our
feet

Carefully . . . Then they nosed
Their soft cool muzzles over the bags for some-
thing to eat,
And stood for a while, and dozed . . .

They switched their tails, remembering the
long day
They'd carried us . . . and the flies . . .
They stared into the fire and rubbed their heads
together —

Raised them with startled eyes
At the strange nicker far off in the sage —
Nostrils wide,
Bay heads, white noses tossed back from the
dark.

The sound died . . . The fire licked out and died.

They drooped their ears and pawed, and nosed
The bags again, lipped a few scattered grains,

Then wandered away and dozed . . .
Watched each other in the moonlight, shud-
dered, and sighed,
And stood to sleep . . . The wind drifted their
manes.

And we too turned to sleep, and all night long
We knew that they were round us while we
slept,
And they — they knew it too . . .
Heads turned and tossed.
We swore across their dreams, they nosed in
ours.
Above the corral the moon crept
And made a useless moon-dial of the snubbing
post.

RANCHERS

THEY went off on the buckboard in the rain,
The children in the straw. I didn't know
Which one of the long roads they'd have to go,
But I saw them just as plain.

For anywhere they chose to turn the horses
There'd be the same gray miles of tableland,

The same rank smell of sage, the same wet sand
In the windy watercourses.

And anywhere in time there'd be red hills
Rising, raw rock against the rain. I saw
The plunge and splash across a lonely draw,
The long slow climb with red mud on the
 thills.

And somewhere, in good time, I knew they'd
 pass
As if in secret from the road they travelled,
To follow out like a thread of rope unravelled
Some faint mark in the grass,

And come to a gate, perhaps where a stray
 steer
Breathed in the dusk, or slipped on the wet
 stone there;
And come to a house . . . I knew they'd be alone
 there
Most of the year.

The earth would slowly change where they had
 stepped,
The air would fill up softly with the sound

Of teams, voices . . . I thought the red hills
must have slept
Until they woke the ground.

I thought no words could make, on anybody's
mouth,
As true an image as their hills would keep of
them,
Where on our world spread westward like a cloth
They worked a homely hem.

DARK RAIN: NEW MEXICO

At green twilight the hoofs splashed in green
pools on the road,
And then the rain came again, a gray mist
driving down
Over lomas and green terraced fields, till the
acequias in flood
Rushed with dark water into the last light that
shone —

Shone and died under black trees. Then silence,
and the rain's
Slow creep in the alfalfa, and only the wind's
beat

In poplars, crushing the cool leaves, heaving
through dark wheat.

In the corrals, wind drifted through the ponies'
manes.

At last it has come again, a dark flow in the
blood,

A dark flow of sweet life, like an acequia long
dry

And rushing with wild rain — till I lift in the
gray cloud

That opens now to blue stars the clear cold of
the sky.

... And all night in my nostrils the keen smell
of wet ground,

And all night a deep knowing that the dog and
horses are there

Sleeping around my sleep, and all night long the
sound

Of a wind pouring dark from rain-filled moun-
tain air.

JANET LEWIS

HARD EARTH

HERE the houses
Rock on rock
And the earth
Of shards and knives.

Feet pass
Like linen of Damascus
On the steel mountain
Of creation.

MAY IN THE DESERT

THE dove of Jesus turns
Her colubrine sweet throat
Where the soft color burns
And pulses to her note,

Mourning
And drawing down the sky
To earth
Where the faint voices float.

VACHEL LINDSAY

THE BABBITT JAMBOREE

WHEN I see an Indian dressed for war,
Yet dancing for a Babbitt jamboree
In plumes no Babbitt ever dares to wear,
An anger rises in me
Like high tide in the sea.

These are my own, these Indians. And I know
What makes the breeds more bitter than the
 bloods.

There's just one drop of Indian blood in me,
Yet in tremendous April tides and floods
It seems to sweep upon me when I watch
Those who have owned this land turned to a
 show.

And when I put a feather in my hat,
It is with thoughts the Babbitts cannot know.
Woe to the paleface then who thinks it is for
 show!

That little feather stands for a whole war.
It means I beat the tom-toms in the rain;

It means a scalping knife is in my belt,
That I will lead the young braves not in vain.
It means when all these silly days are done,
Sons of this soil will come into their own,
Sons of the Mohawk,
Sons of Pocahontas,
Bred of these rocks and mountains, blood and
bone.

HANIEL LONG

POEMS FROM A DESERT GARDEN

TOWNS

THE towns in the desert are gardens:
in spring the bloom of fruit trees
floats through them like mist.
But a garden which is always in bloom
lies about the towns and between them,
a garden of cloud and mountain.
From the horizon, petaled with color,
the colossal flowers rise.

CACTUS

In the gloom of northern groves
my ancestors prayed to trees;
but here in the naked sunlight
I worship cactus,
candelabras of crimson flame,
which light a new world for me
where the fruit of thorns is life,
and the fruit of life is beauty.

LIGHTNING

All evening I have watched the lightning:
it crests an unseen cloud with snow and foam,
veins it with fire, like a human hand, or a leaf,
flushes it sulphur and rose.
And through my own body
a vague trembling goes,
as though I too were vapor.

NAVAJOS

On a sorrel pony and a pinto
The Navajos ride towards me.
The woman's blanket is colored
with the sky, and the earth;
and when they come nearer
I see that the old man's forehead
is square and wrinkled and red
like the mesa behind him.

NAVAJO ESCARPMENTS

Escarpments of porphyry,
flanks of vermilion,
enter the mesa for miles,
focus my eyes
on the silver, the songs, the feathers
I can never be part of.

INDIANS

They wear squash-flowers cut in silver
And carve the sun on canyon walls;
Their words are born of storm and calyx,
Eagles, and waterfalls.

They weave the thunder in the basket,
And paint the lightning on the bowl:
Taking the village to the rainbow,
The rainbow to the soul.

PRIMAL

I SAW him by the river-flats
Come naked from a water-hole,
Slender and supple, and black with sun:
The flower, out of the mud;
The child, out of the mother;
The arrow from the bow.

MABEL DODGE LUHAN

FALSE START

ASK me no more of the full flower's speech,
Tell me no more of the ripe fruit's need,
For I am tired of trying to reach the fruit in the
seed.

Leave me awhile, and I will recover
In darkness and night.
It was too soon for me to discover growth in the
light.

Bear with my weakness, my failure, my pain,
Grant me this — only this darkness I need.
I sicken from sunlight, but give me the rain,
for I am but seed.

EDGAR LEE MASTERS

PUYÉ

CITY that vanished before the Spaniard trod
These canyons, and slopes of gravel and clay,
By the dwarf cedar mottled, and these valleys
gray

Purpled by wild verbenas; or these rivers knew
Where the soundless pollen over the grasses
drifted

From the cottonwood, and the exhausted pod,
Here were your walls and towers to the receding
blue

Of heaven from this lofty mesa lifted
In calmness to the unknown god,
By the wisdom of mountains, and the tranquil
endurance of light;

And by the eucharist of fruitfulness, which
drawing near

To the sky-retreating Soul possessed this height
To adore the sun and the summer cloud with
song,

With flutes and drums, for the justice of rain to
cheer

The planted corn; and for the reward along
The streams of game, faithful and without
fear
To Beauty and Life, faithful and calm and
strong.

They were a people whose enchanted eye
Chose this great loftiness to build
Their city of the sky.
They chose it for the shade of cedars to lie
Thereunder, and to watch the eagle gild
His wings in flight on high,
Circling the spires of clouds. They chose
These battlements of rocks against their foes,
From whose sheer edges they could watch,
Lying half open-eyed and count the blooms
Of paint-brush, splotch by splotch
Against the distant flap of the heaven's tent,
Enclosing mountains snow-streaked, where the
glooms
Of thunder purples crowned their blue ascent.
For yucca, flint, they built these storied rooms,
This court, this kiva in the tufa carved
For the rites of gods, whose dwelling was this
air,
This sun, these cedars, these volcanic wastes,

Where only the stunted cactus is not
starved. . . .

But for that god of whom vision is aware
Through vastness over which the eagle hastes
From distant peak to peak was this height
chosen.

War may have taught the caution of this de-
fense;

But adoration of color, form and the Soul
Known only of its truest children, reverence
Of the adorable secret chiefly laid
This city's walls, of which these scattered
stones,

And half unruined walls are the memoir;
And spearheads, bits of pottery, ax and battle-
blade,

And boulders tracing still the zone's
Boundary of the water reservoir,
Filled from the stream from patient jar on jar,
Borne up long steps, up ladders, up the cliff
To the top and the vision of mountains afar,
Where the god in snow had written his hiero-
glyph

Of the cross, the still unfathomed emblem of
war.

But these were saved by the ceremonial

Of life as loveliness. Or if they died,
Their kinsmen smote them by the craggy wall.
Blessed of the Father Sky and Mother Earth
No dawn of banded gold above the mountain
side;

No fleckless noon when the eagle flapped the
hearth

Of the oven sun; nor sundown when the tide
Of light washed back the pebbled stars, and
mirth

Of bone flutes, songs, bewitched the quiet air
Of the court, did they behold the horsemen in
shadowy lines,

The fateful riders helmeted in steel,
The silver glint of guns far down the pines,
The amazement of men as beasts advancing in
zeal

Of gold and of Mother Mary and her Son,
Who had commissioned these centaurs to
teach, to ride

To the utmost bounds of earth, and conquer
every knee

To bend to Mary and her Son, the crucified;
And to waste, slay, burn, and torture that this
might be.

Blessed children of the Sun! The heretic

To the Sky, the Earth, the faggot-bearing
priest,
The conquerors for Francis and for Dominic,
The betrayers of Beauty at Life's feast,
The Judas carriers of the money bag
You never knew. But from this skyey crag
With passion for the Unknown God you ceased:
As a tall pine when touched with mountain fire
Emerges from the darkness as a pyre,
And by wooers and herdsmen is watched afar,
Till darkness is where flame was, and its spire
Which touched the heaven has become a star.

The brother of the Father Sky is Time,
And Time was reverent of these and moved
By the pity of prophecy against the crime
That rode into these villages and reproved
Their worships and their visions with the
sword.

As the chieftains at night over the communal
Fires of the court heaped ashes, so this hoard
Of jars, of turquoise, baskets, flutes was hidden
In burial places and under the fallen wall
By the brother Time. Their songs passed un-
forbidden;
Their worships were never stained.

Their poems perished, but these things remained:

This mesa where they built, showing the vision
That chose it of valley, forest, mountain,
palisade,

From which their adorations having arisen
May be divined, if never again remade.

HARRIET MONROE

AT O'NEILL'S POINT

(Grand Canyon of Arizona)

CARDEÑAS, I salute you!

You, marauding buccaneering Spaniard!

You, ragged and sworded lordling, slashing
through to the seven Cities of Cibola;

You, athirst in the desert, seeking to drink
from the great river —

The Mother of western seas, dear to your Hopi
guides!

You, Cardeñas the Spaniard, three centuries
before the next first white man,

You with your handful of starvelings stood on
this Rim of the Canyon,

And looked down at flecks of water in the
deeps,

Like yellow petals fallen.

You scrambled a few hundred feet down the
sheer rock wall,

And knew you would never drink of that
tawny torrent.

You gave it up, and thirsted, and cursed your
guides.

And your leader, Coronado the adventurer,
Thought you mad when you told your story —
Mad of thirst in the desert,
Dreaming of loud deep rivers
In demon-haunted caverns.

But I believe you.
Here where I stand you stood —
On the rim of the world.
You saw these sky-swept towers,
These terraced purple temples august and terrible.
And over them — over —
You gazed at the Celestial City,
And counted the steps of gods in its ramparts,
And saw the Great White Throne, all pearl
and moonstone,
Beyond, through the turquoise gates.

HIGH PLACES

My mountains, God has company in heaven —
Crowned saints who sing to him the sun-long
day.
He has no need of speech with you — with
you,

Dust of his foot-stool! No, but I have need.
Oh, speak to me, for you are mine as well —
Drift of my soul. I built you long ago;
I reared your granite masonry to make
My house of peace, and spread your flowered
carpets,
And set your blue-tiled roof, and in your courts
Made musical fountains play. Ah, give me
now
Shelter and sustenance and liberty,
That I may mount your sky-assailing towers
And hear the winds communing, and give heed
To the large march of stars, and enter in
The spirit-crowded courts of solitude.

MARGARET POND

ADMONITION

PERHAPS we would have thought no more
about it

Another time of year, but spring had spoken
In her first brave voice of apricot; in singing
peach;

And then at last in a great imploring chorus
Of fragrant apple. Orchards had awakened
On every valley-slanted hill; through every
field

Wild plum ran riverward like a blown fire;
And over the walls of our ancient gardens
Pear trees lifted candle-white spires of bloom
Toward the sky. Our narrow crooked streets
Were flinging before us around every curve
Some unexpected beauty. Petals rippled
Along the mad spring rush of the acequia;
And there were children entering the cathedral
With crisp white frocks, and blossoms in their
hair.

How can they understand the beauty of our
city

Who are not connoisseurs of loveliness?
For it is not the beauty of gay lights;
Nor of swift moving crowds; nor quick young
 laughter;
Nor of shop thronged streets, nor the sharp
 hard chink of money
Passing from fist to fist. Rather it is the beauty
Of an old, old woman in a black mantilla;
Of an old, old woman with unutterable wisdom
Behind her wordless reticence; who lights a
 candle
In token of prayer before a faded picture
Of the Madonna. Or it is humble beauty —
A flock of goats tumbling down a slope
At twilight; or a silent beauty
Of wine-dark shadows shed on purple hills.
Sometimes it is a silver pagan beauty
Of rain, cloud-feathered, running through the
 valley;
Of rain, a tall god, running through the valley
Sandaled with rivers. Sometimes it is the
 beauty
Of a saint's feast day; flowers before a shrine;
A new frock for the virgin — crimson silk —
When she is carried over petaled streets
To San Rosario.

We cannot sell
The beauty of our city for a coin;
Nor make a market-place for loveliness
Where loveliness is bred. We have awaked
Who would, perhaps, have thought no more
about it,

Another time of year. We have remembered
That in no other city could we find
Fruit trees by almost every blue-silled door;
Nor any other place where stars may shine
Serene undimmed above the lighted streets.
Can we consent to have our trees give way
To flimsy houses — houses without trees?
Would men plant orchards for a summer's
length

Or cherish them in time of drouth
With weary toil? Be warned, be warned
By all the exultant clamoring of spring!
Let not the bloom be ravaged, lest the tree die,
And no more fruit hang ripened from the
bough!

EUGENE MANLOVE RHODES

THE HIRED MAN ON HORSEBACK

(With apologies to G. K. Chesterton and Don Juan of Austria)

The typical cowboy is . . . simply a riding farmhand. — JAMES STEPHENS; *International Book Review*

The cowboy, after all, was never anything more than a hired man on horseback. — Editorial Page; *Minneapolis Tribune*, *San Francisco Chronicle*

HARP and flute and violin, throbbing through
the night,

Merry eyes and tender eyes, dark head and
bright;

Moon shadow on the sun dial to mark the mo-
ments fleet,

The magic and enchanted hours where moon-
light lovers meet;

And the harp notes come all brokenly by night
winds stirred —

But the hired man on horseback is singing to
the herd!

(Whoopie-ti-yo-o-o! Hi yo-o, my little dogies!

Doggerel upon his lips and valor in his heart,

Not to flinch and not to fail, not to shirk
his part;

Wearily and wearily he sees the stars wheel
by,

And he knows his guard is nearly done by the
great clock in the sky.

He hears the Last Guard coming and he hears
their song begun,

A foolish song he will forget when he forgets
the sun.

(Whoopie ti yo-o-o! Hi yo-o, my little dogies!)

'We got 'em now, you sleepy men, so pull
your freight to bed

And pound your ear an hour or two before
the east is red.'

*If to his dreams a face may come? Ah, turn
your eyes away,*

Nor guess what face may come by dream
that never comes by day.

Red dawn breaking through the desert murk;
The hired man on horseback goes laughing
to his work.

The broker's in his office before the stroke of
ten,

He buys and smiles and he sells and smiles at
the word of other men;

But he gets his little commission flat, whether
they buy or sell,

So be it drouth or storm or flood, the broker's
crops do well.

They are short of Katy Common, they are long
on Zinc Preferred —

But the hired man on horseback is swimming
with the herd!

White horns gleaming where the flood rolls
brown,

Lefty fighting the lower point as the current
sweeps them down,

Lefty fighting the stubborn steers that will
not turn or slow,

They press beside him, they swim below
him — 'Come out and let them go!'

But Lefty does not leave them and Lefty tries
once more,

He is swinging the wild leaders in toward the
northern shore;

'He'll do to ride the river with!' (Bridging
the years between,

Men shall use those words again — and
wonder what they mean.)

He is back to turn the stragglers in to follow
the leaders through,

When a cottonwood snag comes twisting
down and cuts the herd in two;

When a whirling snag comes twisting down
with long arms lashing hate,

On wearied horse and wearied man — and
they see it come, too late!

—A brown hand lifted in the splashing
spray;

Sun upon a golden head that never will be
gray;

A low mound bare until new grass is grown —
But the Palo Pinto trail herd has crossed the
Cimarron!

A little midnight supper when the play is
done,

Glancing lights and sparkling eyes — the night
is just begun.

Beauteous night, O night of love! — Youth and
joy are met.

Shine on our enchantment still! ‘Sweet, your
eyes are wet.’

‘Dear, they sing for us alone!’ Such the lover’s
creed.

— But the hired man on horseback is off with
the stampede!

There is no star in the pit-dark night, there
is none to know or blame,
And a hundred yards to left or right, there is
safety there — and shame!
A stone throw out on either side, with none
to guess or tell —
But the hired man on horseback has raised
the rebel yell!
He has turned to loosen his saddle strings,
he has fumbled his slicker free,
He whirls it high and he snaps it wide wher-
ever the foremost be,
He slaps it into a longhorn's eyes till he
falters in his stride —
An oath and a shot, a laugh and a shot, and
his wild mates race beside;
A pony stumbles — no, he is up, unhurt and
running still;
'Turn 'em, turn 'em, turn 'em, Charlie!
Good boy, Bill!'
They are crashing through the cedar mottes,
they are skating a rimrock slick,
They are thundering through the cactus flats
where the badger holes are thick;
Day is breaking, clouds are lifting, leaders
turn to mill —

'Hold 'em, cowboys! Turn 'em, Charlie!

— God! Where's Bill!'

The proud Young Intellectuals, a cultured folk
are these,

They scorn the lowly Babbitts and their hearts
are overseas;

They turn their backs upon us, and if we ask
them why

They smile like jesting Pilate, and they stay
for no reply;

They smile at faith and honor, and they smile
at shame and crime —

But the old Palo Pinto man is calling for his
time.

*For he heard old voices and he heard hoofs
beat,*

*Songs that long ago were gay to time with
drumming feet;*

*Bent back straightens and dim eyes grow
bright —*

*The last man on horseback rides on into the
night!*

Cossack and Saracen

Shout their wild welcome then,

Ragged proud Conquistadores claim him kind
and kin,

And the wild Beggars of the Sea leap up to
swell the din:
And Hector leans upon the wall, and David
bends to scan
This new brown comrade for the old brown
clan,
The great hearted gentlemen who guard the
outer wall,
Black with sin and stained with blood —
and faithful through it all;
Still wearing for all ornament the scars they
won below —
And the Lord God of Out-of-Doors, He can-
not let them go!
They have halted the hired horseman beyond
the outer gate,
But the gentlemen adventurers cry shame
that he should wait;
And the sour saints soften, with a puzzled
grin,
As Esau and Ishmael press to let their
brother in.
Hat tip-tilted and his head held high,
Brave spurs jingling as he passes by —
Gray hair tousled and his lips a-quirk —
'To the Master of the Workmen, with the
tally of his work!'

LYNN RIGGS

SPRING MORNING — SANTA FE

THE first hour was a word the color of dawn;
The second came, and gorgeous poppies stood,
Backs to a wall. The yellow sun rode on:
A mockingbird sang shrilly from a nest of
wood.

The water in the acequia came down
At the stroke of nine; and watery clouds were
lifting
Their velvet shadows from the little town;
Gold fired the pavement where the leaves were
shifting.

At ten, black shawls of women bowed along
The Alameda; sleepy burros lay
In the heat, and lifted up their ears; a song
Wavered upon the wind and died away.

And the great bells sang out a golden tune;
Words grew in the heart and clanged — the
color of noon.

A LETTER

I DON'T know why I should be writing to you,
I don't know why I should be writing to any-
one:

Nella has brought me yellow calendulas,
In my neighbor's garden is sun.

In my neighbor's garden chickens, like snow,
Drift in the alfalfa; bees are humming;
A pink dress, a blue wagon play in the road;
Guitars are strumming.

Guitars are saying the same things
They said last night — in a different key.
What they have said I know, so their strum-
ming
Means nothing to me.

Nothing to me is the pale pride of Lucinda
Washing her hair — nothing to anyone:
Here, in a black bowl, are calendulas,
In my neighbor's garden, sun.

THE HIGH WORDS

ALOOF, the words
From mouth to mouth

Wing high
North and south.

In the blue air
Slowly they rise,
Above the wind
And the cloud-ice.

They never wait
For them that fall;
Their shadows are long
As their flight is tall.

In a certain place
At last they speak
To one alone
On a mountain peak.

MORNING WALK — SANTA FE

IN Burro Alley I saw no one,
(This was hours before the sun)
Only the gray adobe walls
Leaning down like waterfalls,
Only the weedy patios
No longer gay with strumming beaux.

Don Gaspar Street, processional,
Dipped and bowed; its shoulders tall
Were red with brick, gigantic words
Rose and soared thereon like birds.

The Alameda was a way
As tranquil as a field in May.
Under the cottonwoods it ran,
And under them I met a man
With frosty beard and cherry eyes.
He looked at me without surprise
Although I carried no pail of food
Nor drove a burro lashed with wood.

I met four burros on Cañon Road,
Every burro with his load;
I looked at them as anyone should
Seeing a burro winged with wood.
Exactly as a river moves
Flowed the placid burro hooves.
I walked away from Cañon Road:
Mine had become a wingéd load.
The dawn was nearer than I knew;
The icy air came up like dew.
De Vargas Street was like a lane;
On Monte Sol I met the rain,
Dripping he brought me home again.

JAMES RORTY

ENTRY TO THE DESERT

If I should hasten or cry out
I would not see the aspens whipping on the rim
Of the red butte to the north;
I would not hear
The rainy march of the wind that breathes
A deeper shadow on the corn.

So . . . let me no less delicately plant
My footsteps on this desert earth
Than the prim quail that leads her grave pro-
cession through the sage,
Or the gray rabbit, pausing lop-eared and alert
Scenting the rain.

REMEMBERING THE MOUNTAINS

Remembering the mountains, I was still
Will you be quiet, my friends — will you ga-
ther close, you who strive so hard to do,
and do?

See, I bring you gifts of silence, and cool snows.

I tell you of tall pines, erect and motionless
pointing at the sky.

I deal treacherously with your desires. I
bleach your hearts. I confront your
troubled faces with the old faces of the
rocks.

I give your strained ears only silence, and the
zoom of the night hawk.

I take the greed of the merchant, the pride
of the soldier, the terror of the driven
worker, and drop them one by one into
the lake.

Will you be quiet, my friends — will you ga-
ther close, you who strive so hard to do,
and do?

See, I bring you gifts of silence, and cool snows.

CARL SANDBURG

A PASSAGE FROM 'SLABS OF THE
SUNBURNT WEST'

A BLUEJAY blue
and a gray mouse gray
ran up the canyon walls.

'Sitting at the rim of the big gap
at the high lash of the frozen storm line,
I ask why I go on five crutches,
tongues, ears, nostrils — all cripples —
eyes and nose — both cripples —
I ask why these five cripples
limp and squint and gag with me,
why they say with the oldest frozen faces:

Man is a poor stick and a sad squirt;
if he is poor he can't dress up;
if he dresses up he don't know any place to
go.

'Away and away on some green moon
a blind blue horse eats white grass
And the blind blue horse knows more than I
do

because he saw more than I have seen
and remembered it after he went blind.

‘And away and away on some other green moon
is a sea-kept child who lacks a nose I got
and fingers like mine and all I have.
And yet the sea-kept child knows more than
I do and sings secrets alien to me as light
to a nosing mole underground.
I understand this child as a yellow-belly
catfish in China understands peach pickers
at sunrise in September in a Michigan orchard.

‘The power and lift of the sea
and the flame of the old earth fires under,
I sift their meanings of sand in my fingers.
I send out five sleepwalkers to find out who I
am, my name and number, where I
came from, and where I am going.
They go out, look, listen, wonder, and shoot a
fire-white rocket across the night sky;
the shot and the flare of the rocket dies
to a whisper; and the night is the same
as it always was.
They come back, my five sleepwalkers; they
have an answer for me, they say; they

tell me: *Wait* — the password all of them heard when the fire-white rocket shot across the sky and died to a whisper, the password is: *Wait*.

'I sit with five binoculars, amplifiers, spectroscopes,

I sit looking through five windows, listening, tasting, smelling, touching.

I sit counting five million smoke fogs.

Repeaters, repeaters, come back to my window sills.

Some are pigeons coming to coo and coo and clean their tail feathers and look wise at me.

Some are pigeons coming with broken wings to die with pain in their eyes on my window sills.

'I walk the high lash of the frozen storm line;
I sit down with my feet in a ten-mile gravel pit.
Here I ask why I am a bag of sea-water fastened to a frame of bones put walking on land — here I look at crawlers, crimson, spiders spotted with purple spots on their heads, flinging silver nets, two, four, six, against the sun.

Here I look two miles down to the ditch of the sea and pick a winding ribbon, a river eater, a water grinder; it is a runner sent to run by a stop-watch, it is a wrecker on a rush job.'

(A bluejay blue
and a gray mouse gray
ran up the canyon walls.)

Battering rams, blind mules, mounted policemen, trucks hauling caverns of granite, elephants grappling gorillas in a death strangle, cathedrals, arenas, platforms, somersaults of telescoped railroad train wrecks, exhausted egg heads, piles of skulls, mountains of empty sockets, mummies of kings and mobs, memories of work gangs and wrecking crews, sobs of wind and water storms, all frozen and held on paths leading on to spirals of new zigzags —

An arm-chair for a one-eyed giant;
two pine trees grow in the left arm of the chair;
a bluejay comes, sits, goes, comes again;
a bluejay shoots and twitters . . . out and
across . . .
tumbled skyscrapers and wrecked battleships,

walls of crucifixions and wedding breakfasts;
ruin, ruin — a brute gnashed, dug, kept on —
kept on and quit: and this is It.

Falling away, the brute is working.

Sheets of white veils cross a woman's face.

An eye socket glooms and wonders.

The brute hangs his head and drags on to the
job.

The mother of mist and light and air murmurs:
Wait.

The weavers of light weave best in red, better
in blue.

The weavers of shadows weave at sunset; the
young black-eyed women run, run, run
to the night star homes; the old women
sit weaving for the night rain gods, the
night luck gods.

Eighteen old giants throw a red gold shadow
ball; they pass it along; hands go up and stop
it; they bat up flies and practice; they begin
the game, they knock it for home runs and two-
baggers; the pitcher put it across in an out-
and an in-shoot drop; the Devil is the Umpire;
God is the Umpire; the game is called on
account of darkness.

A bluejay blue
and a gray mouse gray
ran up the canyon walls.

WILLIAM HASKELL SIMPSON

THE YEARS

ONLY the years go nowhere;
they sit in the plaza,
staring.

Who ever saw the years go anywhere?
they sit in the plaza,
mumbling.

DON FELICIANO GARCIA: WOOD-HAULER

I, FROM the hills, Truchas way, driving three
burros with pinyon loads,
Look in the window, passing by that La Fonda,
at corner of old plaza.

(Hot is the sun at noon, and the miles are *muy*
lejos.)

Por Dios! What does one see?

Me, of the proud name — of the casita by
Truchas, on the hills.

(Have you seen hollyhocks splendid in June,
and heard summer waters singing?)

What does one see?

That *pobrecito* of Tesuque — that Tewa of the
little valley, sitting at table, blowing
smoke in their faces —

In their faces, two fair faces of *señoras ame-*
ricanas, who blow back the smoke in the
face of that *pobrecito* — smiling, the three
of them at nothing.

(Hot is the sun and the miles are *muy lejos*.)

And I, of the proud name, who drive burros
with pinyon loads —

I, who could say to them, bowing low, sombrero
in hand: 'At your feet,' or 'Kiss your
hand.' —

I, of the proud name. . . .

AT CORDOVA

I

At Cordova the high hills hump themselves;
they shoulder up and push the sky up.

At Cordova the adobes cling tight;
they hang on when the hills shoulder up;
they hang on tight and say: we ride with you,
O riding hills, all the way up,
to peak tops and cloud tops.
or, we ride with you all the way down —
to a singsong stream;
all the way to the weaving place. . . .

II

At Cordova the old men say:
we ride with you, O sliding hills;
we ride with you, up or down, zigzagging;
while the years last, we ride with you.

At Cordova the springtime says:
we ride with you, O riding hills, all the way
up;
and the summer-enders say:
we ride with you all the way down.

III

At Cordova a high cross makes a prayer;
it makes a prayer to the God of high hills;
it makes one for Mary, for Joseph, for our dear
Christ.

At Cordova an old woman croons:
si, si, señor, I am keeper of keys that lock in.
follow me and I light you a candle;
follow me and I show you the pretty Virgin —
and *muchas* — *mil gracias* for the silver you give.

At Cordova an old man whispers:
peace for sick souls,
and hollyhocks for beauty hunger.
quien sabe? no one knows.

IV

At Cordova the adobes hang on tight.
and this you may see, with seeing eyes:
young hills, that push the sky up;
old hills, that slide down to a singsong river.
and this you may see, riding up or down:
José and Maria, who cross themselves;
they hug little Jesus Maria closer;
they stir the fire —
the smokes ride up with the high-riding
hills. . . .

V

At Cordova is a long way up,
a long way down;

the high hills hump themselves;
they shoulder up and push the sky up,
they slide down to the river singsong.

NAVAJO

YOUR desert land is —
An old squaw,
Mumbling old words
Beside dead embers of old thoughts.

What she has told you
Is not told to me,
Though I ask.

Your desert land is —
Coyote,
Running alongside white horses
As the wolves howl.

What it has found out, running,
Is not told to me,
Though I ask.

QUIET

THE castaway body of Be-tchi-bnu —
it is covered up,
we cry and are afraid.

The Something that was Be-tchi-bnu —
it is uncovered,
and we shut our eyes for the shining.

The father-mother gods of the Below
comb their hair,
where the one sun shines not
and the four winds are stilled.

The eyes of the sunrise father and the
sunset mother see through all veils. . . .

Be-tchi-bnu keeps the silence.

SADDLE

HASTIN Dot Klish, just Navajo,
Of lonesome place, Chilchinbito —

'Tis you in truth that I would be;
Goodbye to towns, their jest with me.

A horse, a blanket, a smoke or two;
Foot into stirrup and off with you. . . .

Chuska hills, and the Chinle trails;
Shiprock, waiting to spread its sails;

That lonely place, Chilchinbito —
With shooting stars, slip loose, let go!

TEOFILO — HE SAYS

(*Tesuque Pueblo*)

THE Knowing Ones know all —
but this much one may know himself,
when deep thoughts come:

Life is a one-thinking;
it was thought by Those Above,
it is of the always has been,
it is of the always will be.

My body — pouf — it goes out;
like pineknot flames it goes out,
like cigarette puffs it goes out.

But I, Teofilo, called *anciano*, very old,
I go home soon,

where forever spirits of wild plums bloom,
where rainbows bend over,
and eagle feathers mark a last trail....

I go home!

HERBERT J. SPINDEN

THE WILLOWS BY THE WATER SIDE

(Love Song of Santa Clara)

My little breath, under the willows by the
water side we used to sit

And there the yellow cottonwood bird came
and sang.

That I remember and therefore I weep.

Under the growing corn we used to sit,

And there the little leaf bird came and sang.

That I remember and therefore I weep.

There on the meadow of yellow flowers we used
to walk

Oh, my little breath! Oh, my little heart!

There on the meadow of blue flowers we used
to walk.

Alas! how long ago that we two walked in that
pleasant way.

Then everything was happy, but, alas! how
long ago.

There on the meadow of crimson flowers we
used to walk.

Oh, my little breath, now I go there alone in
sorrow.

SLEEPY BIRD LULLABY

(Tewa)

THERE are many sleepy little birds,
Sleepy little birds, sleepy little birds,
So go to sleep, my little girl,
My little Frosted-Cockle-Burr,
O, come you sleepy little birds
And slumber on her hollow eyes
That she may sleep the livelong day,
That she may sleep the livelong night.

THAT MOUNTAIN FAR AWAY

(Tewa)

My home over there, my home over there,
My home over there, now I remember it!
And when I see that mountain far away
Why, then I weep. Alas! what can I do?
What can I do? Alas! what can I do?
My home over there, now I remember it.

LUCY STURGES

MATRIX

TRACE of an ancient race, veiled in oblivion:
Turquoise, carved by Aztec hand
Symbol of a broken land,
Of flaunting cliffs against the sun
And pointed hills as sensuous
As the desert wind's caress.
Arrowhead of porphyry,
Scattered shards of pottery,
And silence, dark, transparent as obsidian.

COMPASS

WEST of the Pinos Altos hills
The Burro Mountains lie,
West of the Burro Mountains,
The desert, and the sky.

South of the Pinos Altos hills,
The Santa Rita mines,
The smoke curls of the mill town
Weaving cloud designs.

North of the Pinos Altos hills,
Fields with poppies gay,
Where tiny cedars scent the breeze.
And yuccas sway.

East of the Pinos Altos hills,
The new days glow,
And what is east of the sunrise,
Only the high hawks know.

N. HOWARD THORP

'OLD NORTH'

WHEN the Mormons drifted southward,
He was one of a ten-span team,
The biggest young ox them Utah
Bull-whackers hed ever seen.

Tawny en bony en holler,
At three years full six feet tall,
En he'd break the chain whenever he'd strain
En a heavy wagon stall.

Out of a team of twenty,
Which died in the White Sands Pass,
He alone pulled through en made his way
To the Springs of San Nicolas.

Twenty Mormon women,
In all, fifty Mormon souls,
Died from the lack of water,
Paying the desert toll.

The ranchmen, on learning the story,
How every one had died,

Let the big steer have his freedom
Through the Organ Valley wide.

In the winter he'd drift down southward
To the Franklin Mountains warm,
In the summer you'd find him grazin'
On the top of El Torro's horn.

No one ever molests him,
A monument he stands
To those pioneers in search of homes,
That gallant Mormon band.

This was the story as told me
By a ranchman's little lass,
Of 'North,' the steer who roams the plains,
And of those in the White Sands Pass.

WHAT'S BECOME OF THE PUNCHERS?

WHAT's become of the punchers
We rode with long ago?
The hundreds and hundreds of cowboys
We all of us used to know?

Sure, some were killed by lightning,
Some when the cattle run,

Others were killed by horses,
And some with the old six-gun.

Those that worked on the round-up,
Those of the branding-pen,
Those who went out on the long trail drive
And never returned again.

We know of some who have prospered,
We hear of some who are broke,
My old pardner made millions in Tampa,
While I've got my saddle in soak!

Sleeping and working together,
Eatin' old 'Cussie's good chuck,'
Riding in all kinds of weather,
Playing in all kinds of luck;

Bragging about our top-hosses,
Each puncher ready to bet
His horse could outrun the boss's,
Or any old horse you could get!

Scott lies in Tularosa,
Elmer Price lies near Santa Fe,
While Randolph sits here by the fireside
With a 'flat-face' on his knee.

'Gene Rhodes is among the high-brows,
A'writin' up the West,
But I know a lot of doin's
That he never has confessed!

He used to ride 'em keerless
In the good old days
When we both worked together
In the San Andrés!

Building big loops we called 'blockers,'
Spinning the rope in the air,
Never a cent in our pockets,
But what did a cow-puncher care?

I'm tired of riding this trail, boys,
Dead tired of riding alone —
B'lieve I'll head old Button for Texas,
Towards my old Palo Pinto home!

JOHN CURTIS UNDERWOOD

FIELD ARCHÆOLOGIST

BACK in New York they can dissect and articulate

A frozen mammoth from Alaska, and the huge bones of sea saurians

Scattered over acres of Bad Lands; we do the same with human life;

Scan in fallen building stones the bones that men began with.

Vertebra set on vertebra, building his long backbone through all time.

He was a snail in a wind scoured cave shell; he raised towers at Mesa Verde.

Now his brain stares from a skyscraper's top and nods from an air plane.

Science questions: 'How did he begin?' in our pottery shards and broken microscope slides.

Here in the field a man may pat a burro or a pack cayuse,

Or an Indian's cousin to a coyote; those old
packers and watchers of our race

Come closer when you unwomb from mother
earth a skeleton lying huddled like an
embryo.

Man is an animal who can grow, and we show
you an ape who has grown to tomb his
dead.

We show you things that have lasted, things
that he lived by and loved;

Trinkets and worn yucca sandals of his women,
and bone flutes of dead dances;

Cherts and spearheads and arrowbeads of flint
he hunted and fought with;

Chisels and gouges, sharp keys to doors of
darkness, hard wedges through stone ages.

There is a bare black bowl coil woven like the
snakes the Hopis celebrate.

Here is a flicker of color pattern in cold ashes
that have kindled the fire that fills all art.

Man is an animal that feels out the earth and
the air till they answer to his hands.

And I tell you this *olla* that held their speckled
seed corn is a spore case for a Bell or a
Marconi.

STANLEY VESTAL

KIT CARSON OF THE U.S.N.

FREMONT talked with the Commodore
On his ship at Monterey:

'They sent me out on a scouting trip
And I've captured California!

'I had no orders for to fight —
Didn't know the war was on!'
The Commodore said, 'You did right;
I like what you have done.

'But I am in command here —
I rank you, don't forget;
You'll have to serve in the Navy now,
Though your feet were never wet!'

Said Fremont, 'All the men I brought
Had never seen the sea;
They called it a big prairie
Without a single tree!'

'Never you mind,' said the Commodore,
'I'll muster them in today;

I'll make them the Navy Battalion
Of Mounted Infantry!

He loaded them into the sloop Cyane
And sailed away that day
To capture San Diego
Four hundred miles away.

Kit Carson lay in the scuppers
As sick as man could be,
And every man in the outfit
Was just as sick as he.

Kit groaned, 'If I could get to land,
I'd never ask to be
A recruit in the Navy Battalion
Of Mounted Infantry!'

Said Kit, 'If I could get to land,
And stand on the firm prairie,
I'd rather fight all the Kioways
Alone, than go to sea!'

When they got to San Diego
The Spaniards ran away;
It was lucky for Kit and the other men
Of the Mounted Infantry.

For the sea had made them as quiet
As any Quaker's grave;
They were so weak that one old woman
Could have thrown them in the wave.

Kit Carson was sent to the President
With news of the victory —
Glad to escape from the Navy Battalion
Of Mounted Infantry!

KIT CARSON'S LAST SMOKE

KIT CARSON came to old Fort Lyons
Sick as he could be:
'Make me a bed of buffalo robes
On the floor in the corner,' says he;

'Make me a bed of buffalo robes
Like we used along the trail;
I thought to ha' lived for a hundred year,
But my heart is beginning to fail;

'I ought to ha' lived for a hundred year,
But the strength in my legs is done;
I swelled the veins in them long ago
When the Blackfoot made me run.

'Take care of my children, *compadre*,
I've taken my last ride;
Bury my bones in good old Taos
By my dear Josephine's side.

'I leave you my Cross-J cattle,
My house and ranch, and the rest;
Tell Wiggins, and Tom, and the Carson men
That I always loved them best.

'Now cook me some first-rate doin's —
I'm tired of this sick man's feed;
A buffalo steak and a bowl of coffee
And a pipe are what I need.'

The Army doctor shook his head
And looked Kit in the eye:
'General, now, you ought to know,
If you eat that meal, you'll die!'

'I never was scairt of death,' says Kit;
His eye was cold and blue;
'I've faced it many's the time,' he said;
They knew his words were true.

'There war times when the Injuns bested me;
There war times when I run like sin;

But I never took fright of a square meal yet,
And it's too late now to begin.

'I'd ruther die on my pins,' Kit said,
'With the bull meat under my belt,
Than to die in my bed by inches
Like a beaver trapped for his pelt.'

They brought him a big thick buffalo steak:
He ate it every bite.
He smacked his lips when he drank the coffee,
And swore it tasted right.

'Will you have your meerschaum, General,
Or your Cheyenne calumet?
Will you have the pipe that Fremont gave,
Or what pipe shall we get?'

'Get me my old black clay, Sherrick;
Give me my old dudheen;
It has been over many a trail with me;
It has seen what I have seen.'

He packed the baccy in the bowl,
Inhaled the smoke so blue;
A happy smile spread o'er his face —
That face so bold and true.

He smoked the pipe out to the end
And brushed the ashes off.
Then Death (whose bullets could not kill)
Killed Kit with a little cough.

The ladies of that lonely post
They loved him one and all;
One gave her satin wedding-gown
To line his coffin-wall.

The ladies on that winter day
For love of one so brave
Pulled from their bonnets all the flowers
To strew upon his grave.

He was happy when he died,
And brave and true alive.
God send the West a many such
To make our country thrive!

EDA LOU WALTON

COME ON THE TRAIL OF SONG

COME on the trail of song,
Leaving no footprints there,
Over the rainbow bridge
Down the mountain stair.

Come on the trail of song,
Gods of the Navajo,
Out of the sky-land
And the five worlds below.

MOUNTAIN SONG

IN a holy place with a god I walk
Upon the summits.
I am old and have walked long with gods,
Soon I shall find the trail of beauty,
And with a god
Walk down into the valley.

COMMUNION SUPPER OF THE
NAVAJO GODS

LIFE pollen,
Mixed with the healing waters
I feed to you,
Mask-of-a-god,
You stir, you stir,
You are awake!
Eat blue-bird pollen of his body,
My brothers,
From healing waters
Drink his spirit,
Breathe deep the eagles-down
Of his life-feather
And be lifted up to beauty!
We have eaten with you,
Mask-of-a-god,
You stir,
You wake from death
And go among men.

INDIAN DEATH

LAND of the Horizontal Yellow,
Walking I come to you
In my old age I come to you,

Searching for night.
Once I ran with Dawn-Boy
Down the land of Horizontal White;
He climbed the sky-road toward the West
And found his rest;
As he has done, so I do,
Land of the Horizontal Yellow
Walking I come to you.

GLENWAY WESCOTT

GIFTS OF THE RIVER

BENEATH Taos mountain
Flecked and pointed,
Rio Grande
Runs in its groove —
A violet zigzag
Like the shadow of lightning.

To the villages
Cleaving for water. . . .

The flowing sound
Laps the tall air
As a wave, sprayless,
Slides, to fail
In the plaza. Autumn
Thin, tinged
Like a fish-scale.

Two Indian faces
Turn as a globe turns
Over a mound

Of maroon and blue corn
In the cob, and pumpkins
Delicate as peaches,
And striped squashes
Unstained by frost.

EVENING ILLUSION

WHEN the sun sinks
Beyond Alcalde,
The watery light
Wavers up to the porcelain walls
In waves, layer on layer,
Slow and foamless.
It is not the sea.

The tamarisks which sway
Are not sea-tamarisks
Rooted in wet sand.
Here are the stone mountains.

But the Spanish women
Walk with dahlias
In their arms, whispering:
'Cruz has bedded
The goats, Diegito

Will go tomorrow
To the mountain to cut wood.
And is there water in the
Sea, do ships come in
Full of men, my
Mother, grandmother, her mother,
Ah. . . .'

The mist is dry as the sand.
They promenade
Two by two
On the faint beach.

NATIVES OF ROCK

THE fire cut away
The soft forest
Down to the rose-pink rock
Harder than light.

Movement is not easy
In the mountain clearing
Where all that is not stone
Imitates and is above stone.

We ride so high
That we are embedded

In the air, O crystal,
And cry for love among aspens,

Ferns that uncoil beneath,
Cry discontent. At night
We lie down
On red granite

Ledges, throat on throat,
Mid polished berry rods,
Eyes wide open
For the early rays' stir:

Illusion of antelope
Who make the horizon
Quiver upon their lifted
Spikes, and lap the dew.

YVOR WINTERS
TWO SONGS OF ADVENT

I

ON the desert, between pale mountains, our
cries —
Far whispers creeping through an ancient shell.

II

Coyote, on delicate mocking feet,
Hovers down the canyon, among the moun-
tains,
His voice running wild in the wind's valleys.
Listen! listen! for I enter now your thought.

THE LITTLE DEITY ALONE IN THE
DESERT

My life is here
A contemplation of slow days and distant
women.

Women standing in the sky-line
As if about to turn their shawls and leave their
doorways.

The illimitable movement of my hand
Across the desert
Contrives against their motions and my being.

THE SILENT DAYS

HERE men go
In and out of doors
And women stand —

Beneath dry trees
A child drifts and is still.
With brevity
Men break a bitter bread.

My books
Are fallen leaves —
I, unidentified,
As books passed by at will.

DEATH GOES BEFORE ME

DEATH goes before me on his hands and knees,
And we go down among the bending trees.

Weeping I go, and no man gives me ease —
I am that strange thing that each strange eye
sees.

Eyes of the silence and all life an eye
Turn in the wind, and always I walk by.

Too still I go, and all things go from me
As down far autumn beaches a man runs to the
 sea.

My hands are cold, my lips are thin and dumb.
Stillness is like the beating of a drum.

THE SOLITUDE OF GLASS

No ferns, but
Fringed rock
Spread on hills
To cover us.

On stone of pollen
At the bend of sight
Stiff rocks
Cast violet eyes

Like rays of shadow,
Roam
Impenetrable
In a cold of glass —

The sun, a lichen
Spreading on the sky
For days
Behind the cold;

The burros,
Like iron-filings
Gathered to
The adamant.

SONG FOR A SMALL BOY WHO HERDS
GOATS

SWEETER than rough hair
On earth there is none,
Rough as the wind
And brown as the sun.

I toss high my short arms
Brown as the sun,
I creep on the mountains
And never am done.

Sharp-hoofed, hard-eyed,
Trample on the sun! —
Sharp ears, stiff as wind,
Point the way to run!

Who on the brown earth
Knows himself one?
Life is in lichens
That sleep as they run.

EDITH WYATT

ON THE GREAT PLATEAU

IN the Santa Clara Valley, far away and far
away,
Cool-breathed waters dip and dally, linger to-
wards another day —
Far and far away — far away.
Slow their floating step, but tireless, terraced
down the great plateau.
Towards our ways of steam and wireless, silver-
paced the brook-beds go.
Past the ladder-walled pueblos, past the or-
chards, pear and quince,
Where the back-locked river's ebb flows, miles
and miles the valley glints,
Shining backwards, singing downwards, to-
wards horizons blue and bay.
All the roofs the roads ensconce so dream of
visions far away —
Santa Cruz and Ildefonso, Santa Clara, Santa
Fé.
Ancient, sacred fears and faiths, ancient, sacred
faiths and fears —

Some were real, some were wraiths — Indian,
Franciscan years,
Built the kivas, swung the bells, while the wind
sang plain and free,
‘Turn your eyes from visioned hells! — look as
far as you can see!’
In the Santa Clara Valley, far away and far
away.
Dying dreams divide and dally, crystal-terraced
waters sally —
Linger towards another day, far and far away —
far away.

As you follow where you find them, up along
the high plateau,
In the hollows left behind them Spanish chap-
els fade below —
Shaded court and low corrals. In the vale the
goat-herd browses.
Hollyhocks are seneschals by the little buff-
walled houses.
Over grassy swale and alley have you ever seen
it so —
Up the Santa Clara Valley, riding on the Great
Plateau?
Past the ladder-walled pueblos, past the or-
chards, pear and quince,

Where the trenched waters' ebb flows, miles
and miles the valley glints,
Shining backwards, singing downwards to-
wards horizons blue and bay.

All the haunts the bluffs ensconce so breathe
of visions far away,

As you ride near Ildefonso back again to Santa
Fé.

Pecos, mellow with the years, tall-walled Taos
— who can know

Half the storied faiths and fears haunting green
New Mexico?

Only from her open places down arroyos blue
and bay,

One wild grace of many graces dallies towards
another day.

Where her yellow tufa crumbles, something
stars and grasses know,

Something true, that crowns and humbles,
shimmers from the Great Plateau:

Blows where cool-paced waters dally from the
stillness of Puyé,

Down the Santa Clara Valley through the
world from far away —

Far and far away — far away.

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